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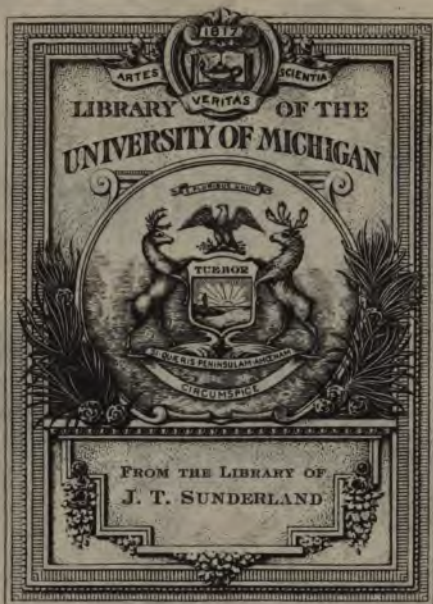
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Rev. J. T. Sunderland

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The Brahma Soma.

KESHUB CHUNDER SEN'S

LECTURES.

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THE DESTINY OF HUMAN LIFE.

Saturday, 11th January, 1862.

SOMETIME ago, I was requested to deliver a Lecture at the Bhowanipur Brahmo Somaj, but a variety of circumstances, chiefly pressure of important and arduous duties, prevented me so long from complying with that request. With this humble apology, I now appear before you—not, however, without a grateful appreciation of the honour you have done me. The circumstance of my having chosen the *Destiny of Human Life* for my subject, in preference to others, requires, perhaps, a word of explanation. That this subject involves an inquiry of stupendous magnitude and of paramount importance to us, as rational and accountable agents, cannot be disputed. It embraces the grandest problem of our existence, and furnishes an answer to the first query of the soul—What am I and wherefore this life? It evolves the very fundamental principles of ethics and religion; it exhibits our true position, unfolds the meaning of duty, and leaves us without an excuse for the accomplishment of that duty. Hence it may be said to “come home to our bosom and business.” Certainly every man having a soul to look after, ought seriously to enter upon this enquiry as the chiefest inquiry of his life here and hereafter; for without a true appreciation of our destiny, all knowledge is useless, and all attempts at progress but aimless or misdirected efforts. These are the con-

siderations which have determined my choice of the subject fixed for this evening.

What is the Destiny of Human Life is the solemn and stirring problem we have to solve. Has man any assigned path for his career in life, any fixed purpose to accomplish? or is he a creature of chance, a pendant that hangs on circumstances, an eccentric phenomenon in the universe, with a purposeless, aimless life? If we survey the amplitudes of nature, we will find that all objects have peculiar purposes to accomplish. Throughout the whole range of animate, as well as inanimate existence, there is hardly anything which has not a fixed course to pursue,—fixed by the irreversible laws of Providence. Each object has a fixed mode of action, each being is destined for a peculiar mode of life. Behold the countless planetary orbs of heaven—those luminaries suspended on high! They revolve unceasingly in their respective orbits, around their respective suns; and they never depart from their prescribed paths. This revolution around their central suns is their *destined* movement. The egg gradually develops itself till the bird comes out, which grows in size and stature, lives in its peculiar style, then perishes. So the seed develops itself and forms the tree with its peculiar leaves, flowers, and fruits. This development is the Destiny of the seed. So incontestable is the truth which we are discussing, that to whichever side we turn our eyes, we meet with overwhelming testimony to it. The aggregate of these regularities in the pursuit of peculiar and fixed destinies may be denominated NATURE. It is *natural* for the rose to have the colour, form, size, and mode of development, to the combination of which we give *the name* Rose: were they different, we would call *the rose* unnatural. It is natural for the sun to

impart light and heat ; for heat to expand, and cold to contract objects ; it is natural for our lungs to inhale oxygen and exhale carbonic acid gas : it is natural for light to exhibit seven primary colours ; it is natural for water, in obedience to hydrostatic law, to seek its own level. This constant tendency towards destiny, then, this conformity with established law, is Nature. I apprehend, however, we have taken the term Destiny in its widest and, perhaps unphilosophical signification ; for its application to gross material objects may be considered objectionable by reason of the importance and grandeur with which theology has invested it. It applies with characteristic force to man. In a world in which all material objects and inferior animals pursue their respective paths fixed by Providence, man cannot be supposed to be a purposeless, eccentric phenomenon. He also has a part to play,—and a most important one indeed, in the amphitheatre of the world allotted to him by Providence : and to play this part is consonant to his nature. His destiny is to attain God, or to make constant progress unto Him. To strive to do this is natural : the reverse is unnatural ; virtue is natural to man, and vice unnatural. The only material difference in the two cases is that, while the inferior animals are forced to pursue their destiny by blind necessities—and have no free power of their own, man voluntarily endeavours to accomplish his destiny : he may, if he chooses, refrain from its pursuit. The destiny of man is the destiny of a *person* not of a *thing*—in his case to accomplish destiny is not to yield to a physical necessity or a brute propensity, but to exercise free power, independent energy. This freedom, however, does not in any way affect the argument of a *fixed* destiny for man. His destiny is not—to follow either

virtue or vice, according as his choice may lead him: he is destined to attain the former.

We have said, virtue is natural. This opinion is evidently opposed to the theory of a certain class of theologians, who regard ungodliness as the natural condition of man. They uphold the notorious dogma of the universal depravity of human nature. They believe that man is naturally corrupt and wicked, and that righteousness is anything but natural to him. Hence, with them, the pursuit of destiny by man is not a *natural* process. Our view, as I have already said, is different. To live religiously is to live *naturally*: to live naturally is to act up to the dictates of conscience. To live to nature is to live to God. There can be no corruption in the nature of man as created by, and coming directly from, the hands of God. Our impurities are not God's creation but the creation of our free-will; and unreasonable is it to charge nature, and thereby "nature's God," with sins of our own doing. It is clear, then, I trust, that to act up to nature is to accomplish our destiny. Our duty and strenuous endeavour should therefore be to live conformably to our nature. As unnatural is it for matter to be devoid of its properties of inertia, compressibility, etc., as it is for the soul to become sinful and corrupt. Man is destined by Providence to pursue the path of virtue and truth: not to pursue it, is unnatural.

Man's destiny, then, is to attain God, or make progress unto Him. In other words, progress or development is the end of our being. This is the true vocation or mission of man in this world. Every man is thus a missionary. They alone are not deserving of the name of Missionary who are *paid* for their mission: who go from country to country to fulfill religious or political missions.

Strictly speaking, all men are missionaries, of whatever age, country or position. We have been sent to this world with a mission sacred and solemn, for the proper discharge of which we are accountable to Him Who hath sent us: with care and fidelity, therefore, must we all strive to discharge it. There are many who suppose the mission of man to be to secure deliverance from sin and its punishment. This is Salvation according to them. This, however, does not indicate anything positive as the end of our being. True Salvation has a negative, as well as a positive, side: it liberates us from sin and the world, and it gives besides Truth and God. This salvation—the soul's progress unto God, in faith, purity, and love, is to us the grand object of life. But this progress must be of the whole life: we must seek the development of the whole man. All the compartments of life must advance in the way of truth: all the powers and sentiments of the mind must be cultivated and developed. What then are the compartments of life? According to some, they are the mind, the heart, the soul, and the will; in other words, the intellectual, the emotional, the devotional, and the practical. The progress of all and each of these departments of our being is our Destiny. Another classification of the departments of life is—the intellectual, social, domestic, moral, religious, etc. In whatever way we choose to divide life, the principle for which we are contending remains unaffected: all the ideas and energies of which we are possessed, must be duly cultivated; the neglect of any one of them is so much departure from our destiny. I repeat, it is the progress of the whole life, and not of a part only, that constitutes our destiny. That is not true progress where the intellect only is cultivated, or the feelings

alone are developed: that is not true progress, if one part of our nature advances, while the other lags behind; one part undergoes an abnormal protuberance as it were, while the other lies in a state of depression. It is the progress not of a half, a fourth, or a sixth, of our life, but of the whole integral life that we are to seek. This normal development of the whole man—this “one continued growth of heavenward enterprise,” is the true destiny of human life. Our progress must also be ceaseless and constant. It must not be by fits and starts; it must not be by an alternation of movement and apparent stand-still. The soul is never stationary; it must move whether it be towards good or evil: *statu quo* can never be predicated of the soul.

Our progress, then, must have *thoroughness* and *constancy*: there must be a steady progress of the whole life. This is the soul of religion: unity and consistency form its essential characteristics. Whether religion signifies the bond that binds “man to man, and all to God,” or the consecration of the body and soul to God, or the purification of the heart, or the discharge of our various duties, as different moralists define it, *consistency* is at once its vital and crowning principle. Worldly prudence may ignore it; worldly circumstances may interfere with it: but the voice of true theology is—Serve the Lord consistently: glorify His name everlastingly. There is a restless character about religion which precludes the enjoyment of a convenient stand-still after a definite amount of progress, and which, on the contrary, keeps it perpetually a-going, by impelling it, after each exertion, to fresh activity. There is a unity in religion which, however our wishes may incline and theories dictate, can never be fractioned. Religion is *not a thing of “shreds and patches”*—which one

might mutilate or modify at will. It suffers neither subtraction nor division. You may rest satisfied with a fraction of it and proclaim yourself religious ; but it never admits of being thus mutilated. It is one indivisible unity which, if you seek to have it, must be sought in its entirety and fullness. To be religious in the morning, but not in the evening ; to be religious in seasons of prayer alone, but not in practical life ; to be religious on special occasions and in special conditions of life, is to have the shadow of religion—not the reality. Religion is not confined to the heart or the intellect ; it pervades the whole life and enters into every creek and corner of its varied details, illumining and ennobling all its thoughts and feelings, its words and actions. When applied to life, it resembles—not a country composed of distinct and separate principalities, but—a deep, full river flowing in one current towards the inexhaustible ocean. So flows the truly religious life, integral and entire, in one unchanging direction towards the Illimitable Infinite Being. Every faculty, every sentiment, every deed, is heavenward : the whole life faithfully and consistently glorifies the name of the Lord. In this unity and consistency lies the dignity of man ; in this consists true MANHOOD. For if man is man only so far as he seeks to compass his destiny, they who seek to be religious by fits and starts, who rest satisfied with partial obedience to God, are with as much plausibility of reasoning entitled to be called men, as the petals of a flower deserve to be called a flower, or a piece of stone a hill. It is the faithful adherence to our destiny that determines our manhood. So far as we progress in godliness, so far we are men—departure from this heaven-appointed path of progress is so much want of manhood. This is the argument in its utmost stretch :—

the question is not, whether we can be religious within limits prescribed by our own judgment, but whether in that case we can be said to have attained *manhood*? Our manhood, then, is always to be measured by this criterion—How far we are true to that entire and devoted service of the Lord, which is required of us.

Behold the length and breadth of the grand destiny of man: behold his heavenward mission! There is something within us, too, which impels us to this great mission. We feel an impulse in the deep places of the soul stirring us to ceaseless onward progress. We cannot resist it when it acts with full constitutional force. Led by this impulse, man moves forward against all the contingencies of life and all the temptations thereof, encounters opposition with a heroic front, and endures hardship and misfortune with patience. If he slips from the path of his great vocation, he deeply grieves at his own folly, and severely rebukes his own will;—he dares not impute the guilt to the Godhead. He deplores the abuse he has made of the nature given him by Providence, but sees no inherent depravity, no original wickedness in it. If we closely examine the depths of our constitution, we shall, perforce, exclaim—How great is man; how celestial the nature planted in him by God! But in what, especially, does the greatness of man consist? Not certainly in his animal cravings and sensual propensities; not even in his emotions or thoughts howsoever exalted and deep,—but in his *personality*, in that freedom of his soul which spurns the offers of temptation, and vigorously opposes its own strength to the antagonism of the world,—in that firm, undaunted energy of character which cannot be bent down by the weight of *opposition*. It is when circumstances tryingly

gather around man ; when clouds of malice and storms of opposition that can shake the stoutest heart, and send awe and despair into the veins of the most valiant hero, hover about his head ; when misfortunes assail him from all sides :—it is in such circumstances, I say, that the nobility which abideth in him is manifested. It is not when the soul sleeps on the easy couch of indolence, amidst the luxuries of fortune, nor when it lies on the peaceful bosom of conservative or partisan policy, away from all opposition, that its greatness is, or can be, evinced. It is opposition that strikes the heavenly fire latent in the human soul. The lives of personages who have suffered hardship, privation, and even death for the sake of truth, are living sermons which loudly preach the dignity which is in man. To be subject to external influences alone—to be a slave of circumstances—is unmanly. But consistently to sustain the principle of truth, intrepidly to bear up against all opposition with the force of free-will, steadily to steer the vessel of life on the billows of the world, swerving neither to the right nor to the left :—this is manly, this is worthy of a personal soul, this shows how great is man ! Just contemplate a pious soul earnestly struggling to glorify God in the midst of tribulation, full of unconquerable fortitude and enthusiasm, and prepared to offer in a right bold spirit the last drop of his blood in the cause of truth. Indeed such a scene is heaven upon earth ! Imagine, on the other hand, a tame, indolent soul hanging upon the flimsy thread of circumstances. A gale of popular opinion comes from the east and instantly destroys all its principles ; some fashionable vices coming from the west at once drift it upon the shoals of intemperance ; the threats of orthodox guardians and the base machinations of worldly-minded comrades damp all its

spirits, and drive it into the detestable attitude of unmanly cowardice; in short it is carried to and fro by a variety of external impulses, and is moulded and fashioned into various shapes by the influence of time and place. Here you see no freedom, no greatness;—on the contrary, weakness, cowardice, vacillation, and a bondage of the worst type—a devotedness like that of the irrationals to the blind necessities of animal nature. Instead of the exalted, heavenly freedom of man, you behold the base, carnal bondage of the brutes!—yea, the unconscious inertia of matter! A piece of wood carried adrift along the violent currents of the sea; a feather thrown into the air, and driven to and fro by the four winds of heaven; a piece of paper burnt and converted into ashes by fire;—are not these and such other instances analogous to the condition of the soul, which is entirely dependent upon external influences, and is devoid of freedom and self-command? In this condition man is not a *person* but a *thing*—not a free being, but a stone screwed by iron necessity—not upright and exalted as a child of heaven, but ignoble and mean as a worm which creeps and crawls on the low platform of the earth. There is no celestial beauty then in the soul—its crown of glory is gone: it is of the earth, earthy. In this condition, instead of upholding the law of God consistently and thoroughly, man unscrupulously transgresses it whenever worldly interests are at stake. And in so doing he is seldom without an excuse. A father's peremptory biddings, a mother's earnest entreaties, a brother's deliberate expostulations, the united remonstrances of an assembled neighbourhood, exercise an influence by no means easy to resist, and thus offer specious arguments for interfering with full allegiance to the Lord. *We all know that there is sorcery in earthly tempta-*

tions, and power in earthly terrors, to which the heart, unless duly fortified, must succumb. Under their influence men seem to gravitate to the earth and to experience a lack of that holy zeal which sets them forward and upward. They balance all arguments pro and con, and instead of abiding by the decisions of conscience, they refer questions of their moral life to the worldly-minded, to whose dictates they learn to yield. There is, according to them, no such maxim as "I *must* do that which is right." Circumstances are to be taken into account; place, person, and time must be considered; the feelings and opinions of the world at large must be consulted, and I must determine my course of action accordingly—such is the base language of those who do not care to use their manly independence; whose sun of moral liberty is eclipsed by the intervention of worldly opinion. Appeal to your own consciousness, and say, is there not within you a spark of God's almightiness, which is sufficient to show the absurdity of such pretexts—a power which will maintain its ground even were the whole world to join in hostile array against it—a principle which disdains to enter into compromise with the things of this world even if life were at stake? Let us do justice to our nature by knowing what ingredients it is made of. Let us believe that we *have* a power to resist the temptations of the flesh and the oppositions of puny man, and that no pretext will avail to palliate or justify our abuse of the sacred prerogatives and powers vouchsafed to us by Providence. We must move heavenward, come what may. God must be glorified, even though it be by sacrificing life. By this noble motive we must be actuated; by this rigid test we must try our lives, and if we find aught within us which stands in an

attitude of rebellion against the Lord, let us forthwith pronounce our imperfection. We are often tempted to believe that we are great, when in reality we are not so; we feel proud of our position as men, boast of our prerogatives, look down upon the rest of creation in a lordliness of demeanour, and extol our own powers and attainments. And yet how instantaneously does the application of the rigid test alluded to break up the charm, and reveal "self" to our eyes in its true colours. Is it not absurd to suppose that we are men when we are followers of God *conditionally*, when our righteousness is conditioned by worldly prudence and convenience. Man is *consistent*. He retains his manhood always. He will have one aim wherever he goes—under whatever circumstances he is placed. An essential sameness always distinguishes him. He carries his firm principle of entire obedience to God through all the vicissitudes and reverses incident to his existence in this world: whether in the bustle of business-life or in the calmness of solitary concealment; whether strong or weak, rich or poor; whether basking under the sun of prosperity, or pining away his days in the hovels of penury,—he is but one man, consistent and firm in all his ways. Though surrounded by the most trying afflictions and privations, such as forebode death, his bold and serene forehead continues unruffled; his strength of character remains unimpaired. Observe his consistency:—amid the billows of life's stormy sea he stands firm and immovable as the rock: amid the terrific gloom of adversity the light of his soul shines as the meridian sun; amid the howling blasts and tornadoes of persecution, he is secure in the impregnable fortress of pious resolve. Nothing can change him;

his soul is above the tyranny of man and the enticements of the world!

But, perchance, it will be said that we are indulging in a mere theory—describing an ideal, a fantasy of the imagination, which has no counterpart in reality. Does a man of this description actually live? In many a century, no doubt, such a picture of manhood is to some extent realized. Inspired personages appear in the world now and then to show the grandeur of human nature and the exaltedness of which it is capable; to exhibit in actual life the heights of moral excellence. Their lives awaken our ambition and aspirations to emulate them, and serve to show we are capable of endless improvements. These men fought against time and circumstances, opposed the firmness of their moral principles to the influences of the tempting world, and at last came off victorious. They warred against an opposing world for some masteridea, and they resigned not the conflict till they made that idea triumphant—so hardy was their will, so inflexible their resolve. But ordinary humanity, it is contended, does not manifest any thing like consistency; for mankind at large, the theory we are discussing is a mere abstraction. Hence, many have scouted it as an extreme of ethical dogmatism! They argue that the theory is too rigid for the nature of man. Humanity is prone to error. Man, though weak and infirm, is beset with countless temptations and is thus exposed to a singularly unequal fight. He has no power to grapple with, much less to overcome, the temptations of the world; so that to attempt to exact from him *thorough* obedience to the requisitions of religion is to demand what he is constitutionally unfitted to render. The aim is beyond the reach of his capabilities—the law is too strict for his

observance; some allowance must therefore be made; the law must be accommodated to his imperfect nature. And thus, on the ground of the infirmity of human nature, the astounding doctrine is upreared, that instead of attempting to keep the whole law of God, it is reasonable to follow that much of it only which appears adapted to our frail nature and our trying position in this world. Thus these arguers take upon themselves to pass judgment on God's law, and pronouncing its unsuitableness, at once set about curtailing it,—as if God Almighty had no fore-knowledge of man's future, and, therefore, framed a law which required the profound wisdom of worldly men to render it suitable and seasonable! The consequence is, that portions of the divine law are retained, and the rest abjured; and thus a new code is promulgated by man to supersede that of God! Behold the achievement of these industrious, worldly theorists! They have manufactured a code of convenient religion and easy morality which they hawk in the streets thus—“Here is religion selling at a cheaper rate; here is morality at discount!!” And for politic reasons this new-fangled code is said to be not man's law, but God's law adapted to the nature of man—a mere *constructian* put upon the pandect of heaven; and thus, what is in reality a purely human invention and a manufacture of worldly wisdom, obtains currency among mankind with the forged impress of the divinity. What a daring insult to the infinite wisdom of the Almighty! What an impious presumption! What a tampering with God's sacred pandect! Remember, my brethren, that we can never mutilate the law of God, for truth mutilated and divided is no longer truth. If we attempt to do so, we are traitors to Conscience and to God. *When God says* “Thou shalt obey this law,” it

must be obeyed at all hazards and under all circumstances. The slightest modification of it to suit our convenience is impiety and abomination. When I know distinctly and believe firmly that it is God's law, shall I suffer myself to transgress it at the dictates of my darling propensities and my vitiated desires, and then seek to palliate my guilt by pronouncing the law to be defective? The law of God is strict; it transcends time and space; it is absolute. We must endeavour to fulfil it—not partially, but wholly and thoroughly. Entire obedience is required of us. Our lives must be thoroughly consecrated to Truth and God. But if, instead of doing this, we render unto God a portion of our affection, reserving the remainder for the world, whatever be our pretensions and profession, we are actually followers of our own carnal cravings, not God's law. Indeed, in nature of things, a compromise between God and the World is impossible, so essentially distinct is the one from the other. And yet it is held by the arguers alluded to, that situated as we are, beset with a variety of relations and duties, and chained to innumerable interests, we are bound to satisfy both God and man—follow the requirements of conscience and the usages of society. Such arguments tend to subvert the whole of God's government; for if man sits in judgment on the institutions of God, and arrogates to himself the prerogative of framing and enforcing moral laws, then divine legislature becomes but a name, and man is the real arbiter of the soul's destinies.

What I have said about compromise is confirmed by our everyday experience. Our orthodox guardians, when they seek to dissuade us from heterodox movements, use the very arguments I have already dilated upon. "We have no objec-

tion," they say to us, "to your endeavouring to become religious ; but you must manage so that you do not sacrifice your worldly interests, or offend your friends and relations. Serve your God and society both. Move slowly, and be temperate. Do not run too far ; be not rash. Adapt your religious beliefs and sentiments to the spirit of the age ; respect the feelings of those around you. Be not carried headlong by fanatical frenzy. Do not forego temporal interests for the sake of God, but make such subtractions from your religion as may enable you to live conveniently in the midst of family and society. Thus you shall pass through the flowery paths of prudent religion till you get both world and God ; while you shall only enjoy the latter, if you conform to the strict routine of an enthusiast's creed." Such is the language in which the orthodox seek to divert us from the consistent and entire service of the Lord. Now, tell me, can we feed the humours of these conservatists, and for their satisfaction follow the God-and-world policy which they recommend ? Admit that the aim is high ; that it is not possible to accomplish it fully—what then ? Shall we set at naught the noble purpose for which we are created—ignore the grand destiny of our existence—shall we forget the heaven for which we are made, and crawl like reptiles on the earth ? Certainly not. Let us rather pursue our destiny how high so ever it may be, flinging away all narrow aspirations and low ideas, and abjuring all theories which tend to demean us and insult Him who has created us. The Omniscient God knows infinitely better than the wisest of men what we ought to do, and how far we are competent to discharge our duty. He, in His inscrutable and unbounded wisdom, has framed the law

for our moral government, and He would have us rather yield life for the rigid observance of that law than swerve from it. How can we then pretend to be obedient children of God, when in our actual pursuits we do not display a desire to offer full allegiance to Him ; but on the contrary, refuse to throw away those temporal conveniences and comforts which preclude such an allegiance ? We hear His voice distinctly proclaiming the law—“Love all mankind ;” we ponder and reflect on it, and consider it in all its theoretic bearings ; and we are convinced that the law is unexceptionable. But when the season for action arrives, some circumstance or other turns up to shake our theoretic impressions. Then we depart from the paths of charity ; we are actuated by jealousy, revenge, and all manner of unbrotherly feelings. Then we resort to excuses and pretexts, and persuade ourselves—as the other alternative of acknowledging our guilt is what we are hardly disposed to yield to—that there are exceptions to the law which demands love for all mankind ; at least it must be qualified in special cases. We believe, in theory, that we ought to speak truth always, but in practice we make out exceptions by our own ingenuity where untruth is pardonable. Should we not rather bind up our resolves never to tell an untruth even if our most precious temporal interests were to be sacrificed thereby ? We are fully convinced that God commands us to give the last penny in the cause of truth. Yet when practical difficulties beset us, we begin to suspect whether we have not taken God’s word a little too strictly. We even go so far as to enquire whether it is not a crotchet of fancy, an impression of excited moments, which it is sheer madness to adopt in practice. Instead of taking the plain course of duty in a right bold spirit, we

turn our minds this way and that, to ascertain on which side there is greater happiness ; we form sordid calculations on the principles of the arithmetic of loss and gain ; we weigh our worldly interests, and see to which side the balance leans, in order to determine our course of conduct !

Heaven's law is too sacred to need amendment at the hands of man : divine wisdom requires not the help of human reason to rectify its failings ! If to Heaven, and to Heaven alone, belongeth the power of determining what is right and what wrong is it not impious arrogance for man to act as a critic on His enactments ? Arrogance assuredly it is—arrogance, indicative of a cowardly spirit that dares not serve God manfully, but timidly truckles to its own imaginings and humours. Conscience is the law of God engraven in golden characters on the tablet of the heart—it is REVELATION to us ; and shall we prove our want of faith in that revelation by our practical infidelity ? No ; when God says “This thou shalt do,” let us be all submission. His law is not what we *may* obey, but what we *must* endeavour to obey—with all earnestness and promptness without reserve or compromise. If the strict observance of that law involve us in difficulties and perils ; if it jeopardize all our earthly interests, and even our life, we shall still sing glory unto the Lord. Against the hardy and resolute servants of God who act up to this principle, epithets of slander and obloquy will be levelled with impunity from all quarters ; opposition and persecution they must suffer ; they will be exposed to the most relentless inflictions of the world ;—yea, they will be ridiculed as fanatics and scouted as madmen : and why ?—because with their thorough-going purpose, their stern resolve, their entire submission to the moral law, the world cannot at all sympathize. This is

no fanciful description ; nor do we need an illustration beyond our own experience to verify it. In our day, within the range of our own observations, do we not find the true disciples of Brahmoism exposed to the brunt of the most active opposition and the most virulent slander for violating the time-honoured usages and customs of idolatry to glorify the True God ? And is not insanity commonly ascribed to such men, and is not Brahmoism proscribed as the ravings of delirious minds ? Brahmoism makes the Absolute the end and aim of human life ; and nothing short of continued progress in godliness can satisfy its followers. It enforces the complete obedience of the soul to its Creator ; and thus draws away its followers from the world and makes them lose the world's sympathy.

The soul devoted to God displays a freedom from the bondage of sin and the world, a self-denial which has learnt to forego all the fascinations and prospects of this life at the call of duty, an aspiration heavenward, and a ceaseless progress unto truth. Celestial halo glows around it ; it is dressed in an attire of blessedness and joy. God alone it seeks, and God alone is its joy. In a word the soul is dead unto the world and has been born anew in God. This is what we mean by REGENERATION. The regenerate man has liberated himself from the trammels of this world, and is above its joys and woes, its hopes and fears ; all his desires and aspirations are in the Lord : all his energies and thoughts are consecrated to Him : He is his life, his joy, his love. The tempting influences of the world are lost on him ; for he is *dead* to the world. As the dead body is not susceptible of impressions from without, and as its senses are not affected by external objects, so is the regenerate soul perfectly dead as it were to the

temptations of the world. In vain does the surviving mother shed tears over the dead body of her child,—it hears not her cries ; in vain her delicious things presented before its eyes,—the eyes do not see them : its senses are not alive to external influences, whether of joy or woe. So lies the regenerate soul, unmoved in the ups and downs of life ; the joys and sorrows of the world cannot affect it ; the oppositons of the world cannot shake or intimidate it : *its life is in God*, and not in the world. In such an attitude, you see, the soul has recognised God as the only object of adoration and love, the only Master to be served, and has consequently come away from all the idols which the world worships. It is this idol-worship that forms the great barrier to regeneration—the obstacles in the way of man's destiny. We have been commanded to serve the One True God and make Him the sole aim of our life : this is theism. But if, instead of consecrating the whole life to Him we serve the world and pursue its temptations, we are guilty of idolatry. Consider the awful import of the term idolatry. That alone is not idalatry which worships stocks and stones, things of clay, and beasts and fowls, and identifies them with the very God who created them all. There is a *spiritual* idolatry which makes man idolize the passions of the heart and the fleeting felicities of the world. If the worship of the gods and goddesses of Hindu or Egyptian mythology be condemned as idolatry, is not the worship of Anger and Pride, Wealth and Fame, liable to the same charge ? Are not the covetous, the arrogant, and revengeful, idolators in the strict sense of the term ? Are they not idolators who worship the opinions of family and friends, and for their empty applause transgress their duty to God ? If the worship of aught other than the

True God is idolatry, does not worldiness or mammon-worship fall within its range? Deeply reflect on this, and you will find that there are many, who though they pretend to be no idolators are yet in heart the greatest idolators. To overthrow all kinds of idolatry is the object of Brahmoism. It is the guide which leads to the worship of the True God. Brahmoism—pure Theism—is essentially anti-idolatrous. It demands the soul's separation from all idols, within and without, material and spiritual, and its entire obedience and homage to the One True God. "Worship God and none but God" is its cardinal doctrine. The Theist serves Him as his only Master; there is unity in his life, a strict religious unity which prevents it from pursuing any other object than God. A Brahmo has only one master to serve, one destiny to fulfil. He is not a tool of the world, nor a slave of fortune. He cannot be a Fetichist in the morning, a Polytheist during the day, and a Fire-worshipper in the evening; he cannot be a votary of Fame now, and then a worshipper of Avarice. His heart is set on God. There is a pious ardour in him which is never quenched; is a heavenward activity which never ceases. He is always engaged in a war against the various temptations of life, the multitudinous idols of the world. His noble ambition is not satisfied by any precious thing of this world: give him all kinds of earthly felicity, the insatiable thirst of his soul cannot be quenched. He progresses in an onward direction, heedless of all opposition and allurements. In vain does the world try to shout forth threatenings against such bold followers of Truth. As well might a potentate, ruling over many countries and nations, stand on the sea-shore and command back the advancing

waves ; when lo ! the majestic waves condemn his peremptory bidding, roll onward with resistless impetuosity, and eventually compel the puny potentate to seek safety in flight. It is God's law that governs the sea and its movements ; and human potency must be baffled in its attempts to gainsay that law. Equally ineffectual are the threats and oppositions of the world in turning the righteous from their firm purposes. In the service of God they are firm and constant : they offer allegiance to no idol : they acknowledge and worship Him as their only Master : to obey His law is the grand object of their life—at once their interest, their happiness, and their duty.

Nor can the true servant of God act otherwise. To obey Him is *obligatory* : the principle of fidelity working in the depth of his soul compels such obedience and forms itself into a resolve which becomes inseparable from his life, *viz.*,— to glorify the Lord's name in all his thoughts, wishes and aspirations, words and deeds. Guided by this principle, his tongue speaks truth ; his hands give charity ; he discharges his duties with fearless obstinacy and unyielding constancy. Let all mankind look frowningly on him, he is not to be daunted. Bear witness, says he, bear witness Heaven and Earth ! This is the solemn and inviolable covenant whereby I have pledged my all to God and throughout my life I shall strenuously endeavour to serve Him, and Him alone. Behold man a Covenanter ! We have already viewed him as a Missionary sent to this world for the fulfilment of a great mission : he now appears before us as a Covenanter. He has entered into a sacred covenant with God, and he is bound to fulfil it. His heart and soul, mind and body, have all been surrendered ; all that he possesses has been laid *at the feet* of his Maker ; and never can he swerve

from His will. To the Lord he has sold himself and his all ; and as the Lord biddeth so must he work and move. Neither the dictates of selfish propensities, nor the prudential remonstrances of the worldly-minded, can exert any influence on him. He must walk erect and straightforward in the path of duty, and turn neither to the right nor to the left. The glittering riches of this world are nothing to him ; its pomp and grandeur cannot bribe him away. In all matters he refers to God to know His will, and without scruple he acts accordingly, regardless of all consequences. Like the needle, he turns always to his God ; his eyes are fixed on the covenant. He goes to no place, resorts to no company, enters into no conference, embarks on no undertaking, to which his Master doth not direct him. If the Lord commands him to perform a particular work, instantaneously does he, with child-like simplicity, obey his Father's injunctions, even though worldly advantages appear in superabundance to lead him astray. His studies and meditations, his social intercourse and domestic pursuits, his monetary speculations and his patriotic movements, are all regulated and ordered by Him to whom he has given his all. How amiable is such a child, how faithful such a servant of God ! A uniform tenor of thorough submissiveness and innocent simplicity pervades his whole life ; and, in whatever circumstances he is placed, he is faithful to the covenant. Observe the force of his fidelity, the rigor of his resolve—rather shall life be dragged out of him than one tittle be violated of the pledge whereto he has subscribed. Would you urge that such a covenant is purely chimerical ; or shall I be told that you who are listening to me have not entered into any such covenant ? I do most emphatically assure

you that you, one and all, have signed a covenant with God as soon as reason first dawned upon you and enabled you to distinguish between right and wrong. Dive into the heart, and you will find in its deep places that covenant engraven in indelible characters. Ponder on it, and you will learn what heavy responsibilities lie on your shoulders, what unflinching obedience, what rigid self-denial is required of you. No argument is needed to convince us that we are all bound by the holy ties of moral obligation to serve our God. The voice of conscience is clear, that for Him all sacrifices must be made, and that Him alone should we strive to glorify in all our pursuits. Though the aim is high, too high, for humanity's reach, we must still move on. You are aware, no doubt, that the skilful helmsman, in crossing a river against a very strong current, never fixes his direct aim on the spot just opposite to him, but steers his vessel in a collateral direction, toward a point far in advance of that spot; and yet, such is the force of the stream, that the vessel is driven back far below his mark? We who are directing the vessel of life on the sea of the world against its strong current, must have the wisdom and skill of that helmsman, and never fix a low aim, or else we shall be carried down far below our destination. If we make man our exemplar, or fix any limited standard for our guidance, we shall never be able to draw near to the Most High: our views and aims and desires shall become narrow and unworthy of our exalted position. But if we fix our aim on Him who is the standard of holiness and the emblem of purity, we shall strain our every nerve and brace our every muscle, and the moving and moving onward;—though we once fall back, we shall not lose heart; *each step* we advance shall be the impetus to fresh

exertion. Eternal, constant progress shall mark our career. So many temptations are around us, so many influences are coming from all quarters to lure us into the paths of evil, that we must ply all our energies to go forward to the goal of perfection. When this is done, what order, what harmony, prevails in human life ! Nothing in it is eccentric or disordered ; all our actions and thoughts and feelings revolve round God and are drawn to Him as the unfailing centre. Around Him our lives turn harmoniously as so many planets around their central sun. To glorify His name is the one great and common object of all our pursuits, and this binds together in one consistent whole the countless varieties of our thoughts and deeds. We cannot pursue this path now, and that path then, for our convenience or for our neighbour's satisfaction. One path only is open before us—that of endless progress,—and that we must perforce follow with constancy and faithfulness, if the sacred name of man we aspire to be entitled to, if his legitimate mission we are ambitious of accomplishing. Such is the life of a Covenanter with God.

You have seen man as a Missionary and then as a Covenanter : view him again, and he appears as a Warrior ! Truly man is a soldier in the great battle-field of life. This position of man ought to be properly appreciated. What a solemn scene does this thought open up to us ! There is man armed with all his faculties and sentiments in the midst of unnumbered foes.

Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the lake of Val-lombrosa.

In the most hostile manner, and with all the bitterness of malignity and rancour, and all the sternness of a resolve to ruin their adversary, are they

arrayed against him. They attack him from before and behind, and from all sides they discharge their deadly weapons against him. Now a whole squadron of them makes a desperate charge—like furies let loose; now the most tremendous artillery of persecution is levelled against him, piercing the air with terrific sounds. All this notwithstanding, he stands firm and unmoved. "Steel loses its force on him." With daring fortitude, he stands "before the cannon's mouth," and fears not death: his eyes flash forth celestial ardour; his countenance is all fire; his manly forehead remains undamped and undismayed. The animating voice of the Almighty inflames his holy zeal, and aggravates his courage and valour at a hundredfold rate. Full of unconquerable enthusiasm; and holding the banner of truth in his hands, he repels the stoutest attacks of his multitudinous foes. Thus he wages continual war against his earthly foes with the unearthly enthusiasm which the Almighty inspires in him. To whatever pitch the force of opposition may rise, however perilous his position may be, he cannot, he dares not, show his heels; flight is an utter impossibility. Truth is his watchword; his armour is his strong faith that truth will triumph. He does not think of his family or the riches he has left behind him. He has consigned his all to the care of the Lord, and betaken himself to a soldier's life. The fond caresses of his parents, the tender innocent looks of his only child, the affectionate endearments of his wife, availed not to deter him from his great mission; and while he parted he thus bade farewell to them—"To join the crusade against sin and the world I am destined; consigning you all to the protection of the Merciful Lord, I go. If need be, this life shall be laid at *His feet*. May He bless you all! Farewell." And

when he fights, neither domestic considerations, nor any worldly interests, can induce him back, nor lead him astray. He is bent on his enterprize, and in that he is absorbed ; for that he is prepared to sacrifice all personal ease, endure all hardships and agonies. His ambition and energies are all enlisted in the cause of truth. Valiant soldier of God !—what heavenly greatness is in him—what invincible prowess, what noble ambition resides in him !

Brethren, you have observed the true nature of man. I have described the various stages on which he may be viewed as acting his part in this world—the various phases of his noble destiny on earth. You have viewed him as a Missionary, as a Covenanter and as a Soldier. I trust you understand now the true character of the position you occupy here as men, and the mission you have to accomplish. Stupendous responsibilities stand upon man's shoulders ;—like a Soldier, must he be incessantly active and watchful ; like a Covenanter, must he be faithful and strict ; as a Missionary, he must be ever mindful of the great work for which he is accountable. But if lying on the sofa of indolence and worldly ease, we stretch our limbs this side and that side, seek popular approbation to lull us into sleep, stifle the voice of conscience lest it interrupt our ease, we shall live unto abomination—victims of unmanly cowardice. No ; man must be zealous and enthusiastic. His religion is fiery ; it burns up in one blaze the allurements and oppositions of the world. Opposition, far from extinguishing, does but tend to enkindle the flame of his holy zeal till it touches the very vaults of heaven. To have this enthusiasm you need only remember your great destiny ; the soul awakened to a sense of its nobility will be spurred to corresponding exertion, and will feel a degradation in

being likened to logs of wood that are driven to and fro by winds and waves. Enthusiasm we must have : enthusiasm is the soul of success. Without it our great destiny can never be fulfilled. It is this which so fastens our hearts to the great work for which we are accountable to God, that it at once liberates us from all idle fears, low aims, love of the world, and craving after perishable gain.

After what you have heard, I do not say—Forthwith abandon family and friends, and pine away your days in solitude, in mortifications and sufferings. This I am far from urging. The main principle for which I contend is, that, whether in prosperity or adversity, whether rich or poor, whether surrounded by family and friends, or bereft of all earthly companions and relations—whatever your position and calling, whether ministers of religion, or zemindars, scholars, or traders—you must make God the sole object of your life : godliness must be consistently intertwined with all your speculations and pursuits. It is this consistency and firmness, this heavenward enthusiasm and uncompromising principle of total obedience to God, that I have been trying to impress on your minds ; and to bring home to you this central principle, I have used a variety of illustrations and arguments.

What I have said to you is not a theory of my fabrication, but the positive law of God enjoined by Him. I have not been labouring to force upon you my own peculiar whims and fancies ; but I have spoken to you what God speaks to every one of us, our consciences bearing witness. I ask you to dive into the deepest recesses of your hearts ; you will then be convinced that what I have invited you to do, God is ever and anon preaching to all *His children*.

I rejoice to see around me earnestness in abundance. An encouraging sign I conceive this to be of your interest in the sublime theme on which I have dilated. You have heard me throughout with unflagging attention and patience, and you have manifested an appreciation of the solemn responsibilities which lie on you. I hope and trust that my words have not been thrown upon you in vain. Tell me, then, that you have bound up your best resolves to consistently follow the law of God; and to serve Him as your only Master. Be not intimidated by the scarecrow of imaginary impossibility; suffer not the sluggard's motto—A little more sleep and a little more slumber, to keep you from instantaneous activity in the matter of your mission. Fellow-Pilgrims to eternity! Say with one accord "The die is cast," and manfully cross the Rubicón of this world that you may triumphantly plant the banners of God in your lives. Our meeting here is providential; for who but the Most High has brought us here from different quarters, that we may, giving up worldly thoughts and cares for a moment, earnestly ponder on the great problem of our destiny and effect its solution with His aid. And as Providence has gathered us here, I trust He will impress every heart here present with the importance and necessity of practically discharging those grave duties which we have been discussing. May your *deeds* prove your manhood, and exhibit the heavenly effulgence of Brahmoism. Brahmoism have I said? Aye, that life-giving system of faith, which points out our true mission and teaches us the means whereby it can be accomplished;—in the deep places of the heart you must therefore cherish it, and render your hands subservient to its calls. I have not come for the purpose of simply whiling away a few

idle hours. Nor have I come to address the inanimate walls of this hall. My object has been to ply your *consciences* with earnest invitations to the performance of your high mission ; and if this object has been gained to any extent, my labours have been amply awarded. Brethren, I feel fatigued ; exhaustion has come upon me—I pray that God may bless you all and help you on to your great destiny. And as He shall give grace unto you, may you not be wanting in that energy and heavenward ambition which is required of you. He will come forward to help us ; but we must go forward to merit His help. With His help practically apply the doctrine of human destiny to the cause of your country. The key of India's amelioration lies in your hands ; and the more you attend to your own destiny, and apply the principle of consistent virtue to all the avocations and relationships of life, the more will you promote the real prosperity and greatness of your country. What prodigious havoc are hypocrisy and inconsistency perpetrating around us ! Methinks suffering India, in piteous tone, is loudly remonstrating against these accursed evils. Her social, intellectual, and moral advancement depends upon you. As the rising generation of your country, you have a power, which others have not, of raising it in the scale of nations ; then neglect not to consecrate all your energies, now that they are in the bloom of manhood, to the cause of patriotism and charity. Fellow-countrymen ! do you now feel deeply your responsibility—your solemn duties to yourselves, to your country, and to your God ? If so, gird up your loins, and, “heart within and God everhead,” embark on the great enterprize of your mission. Fling away all those chains which bind you to this world, and set

to work at once. Plant the vivifying and regenerating spirit of Brahmic enthusiasm in your hearts, and fill your souls with stern resolves and high aspirations that kick at terrestrial baubles and soar aloft to the throne of God. You must have *enthusiasm*, I again repeat. It will work a marvelous change in you and inspire you with superhuman strength. Your tongues shall speak eloquence, and your eyes shall flash forth fire; your hands shall become strong and inflexible as adamant in the service of man and God. Your enemies will stand in reverential deference before you, and difficulties of Alpine stupendousness will melt away into nothingness. An enthusiasm like this will convert "poor men's cottages into princes' palaces," and make "each petty artery in the body as hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve." It will make you richer than the richest, and mightier than the mightiest potentate. And thus as you march, valiant warriors! the world will tremble beneath your feet, and blessedness everlasting will be showered upon you from heaven; your family and your country, yea, all mankind will enjoy the harvests which your holy labours will yield. No opposition will intimidate, no terror will terrify you; the edge of penury will be blunted, and death itself will be a scene of hope and rejoicings. Brethren, I have done. What I have said I have said in a brotherly spirit, and I trust you will accept it in a brotherly spirit. Be it your ambition henceforth to make the doctrine of human destiny a reality in your lives, by consecrating yourselves wholly unto the feet of the Lord. May He bless us all, and give us strength and faith that we may serve Him faithfully both here and hereafter.

God Almighty! ere we depart from this place do Thou condescend to impress the great doctrine

we have discussed on the minds of all here present, and so to convince them of its importance and value, that they may not only remember it, but live according to it. We are weak, O Lord : vouchsafe unto us strength, that we may be able to discharge the solemn duties for which we are accountable to Thee. Lord of our life ! Draw our hearts wholly unto Thy service, and enlist all our energies in the cause of truth, that we may do nothing in opposition to Thy will. Help us, O help us, Father of Mercies, for without Thy help all our attempts at progress will be vain. Be Thou our shield and buckler, our light and hope, in this world of trial. Unite us all in one family, and establish universal brotherhood among mankind, that the lives of all may be consecrated to Thee and to Thee alone. From the inmost depths of our hearts may praise and thanksgiving rise unto Thy holy and dear name, now and for ever !

THE BRAHMO SOMAJ VINDICATED.

Saturday, 18th April, 1863.

A FEW days ago a lecture was delivered, in the Hall of the General Assembly's Institution, by the Revd. Lal Behari Dey, on "The Calcutta Brahmo Somaj." That the lecture was anything but original is the best that could be said of it. It was a reproduction of the arguments contained in Revd. Dr. Mullen's book on *Vedantism, Brahmoism and Christianity*, and Revd. Mr. Dyson's book on *Brahmic Intuition*. it is always disagreeable to read a thrice-told tale; it is still more disagreeable to attempt to refute a thrice-told argument, as it necessitates a "hunting up" on the upper shelves of volumes long since permitted to retire on the pension list of the age, and rendered unapproachable by accumulated coatings of dust! I do not suppose, therefore, I shall be able to bring forward any new arguments to combat old arguments; on the contrary, I fear, I shall have to reiterate what has been said several times. In fact I should not have undertaken the unwelcome task of delivering what you may regard as a "counter lecture" on the Brahmo Somaj but for the importunate and earnest requests of my freinds. However, in coming before you to deliver this lecture, I am not actuated by the spirit of retaliation. No, Gentlemen; far

from it: retaliation is the bitterest enemy of the religion which we profess, whose very life is *love* and whose spirit is a spirit of charity. I come here to plead the cause of my religion, not to wage polemical warfare—to vindicate the Brahmo Somaj, its history and its tenets, not to indulge in vituperation or revel in scandal. Not that I fear that in the absence of a strong reply, which this most sarcastic discourse on the Brahmo Somaj calls for, its sarcasms or ingenious sophistications could destroy an iota of the truths of our creed. For ridicule and sarcasm, however much they may combine to exert evil influences, can no more tarnish the glory of truth than the uplifted arms of puny mortal can cover the face of that giant luminary the sun, and prevent the world from being illuminated by it. My belief is, that "truth will triumph," argue as we may, sophisticate as we choose—that misrepresentations and prevarications far from injuring one single atom of truth, or depreciating her value in the least, tend only to the discomfiture of her enemy, falsehood. (*Hear, hear.*) Gentlemen, what I intend to do this evening, is simply to conjure up to your mind a true picture of the Brahmo Somaj, painted in its truest colors, in order to guard you against the errors and misrepresentations with which it was disfigured and set before the public. I am painfully convinced that the Lecturer achieved marvellous success in his attempt to hold up to the derision of a misinformed public the creed of the Brahmo Somaj, which far from being honestly rendered and faithfully portrayed, was clothed in foul misrepresentations, miserably caricatured, and set forth crimped and distorted—a very giant in man's clothes! (*Hear, hear.*) Gentlemen, you will allow me to say then *that my object is not offence but defence.* I desire

to defend the Church to which I belong : to vindicate the honour and reputation of the leaders of the Brahmo Somaj, on whom obloquy was attempted to be hurled ; to vindicate the doctrines and the history of the Somaj from unwarrantable misrepresentation. (*Hear, hear.*) I shall be obliged, in so doing, to make, now and then, passing allusions to Christianity, its history and creed, in order to draw such lessons from comparative history and comparative theology as may help us in the discovery of truth.

The Lecturer levelled a series of unjustifiable and groundless charges against the Somaj, attempting more to drown it with a torrent of ridicule, wit and sarcasm than to argue away its doctrines in a serious and argumentative style. I shall, therefore, be compelled in my reply this evening rather to discuss and remove the grounds of ridicule, which were sought to be established by means of the grossest exaggerations, than to offer anything like a philosophical exposition of our theology. The charges brought against the Brahmo Somaj may be arranged under three heads, *viz.* :—

First.—Brahmoism is a religion of fluctuating opinions, and therefore, no religion at all.

Second.—Common Sense is not sufficient to give man saving knowledge of God.

Third.—The Brahmic theory of Atonement is absurd and pernicious.

Now, Gentlemen, first, in regard to the alleged fluctuations of the opinions of the Somaj, I have to draw your attention at the outset to an important point,—I mean, the difference between *fluctuation* and *progress*. That fluctuation is one thing and progress quite another thing, is, I believe, above all cavilling and controversy. I have in my hand a copy of *The Indian Reformer*, in which I find

reproduced the first portion of the lecture. The Lecturer thus argues :—

“Now, Gentlemen, I trust I shall be the last person in the world to find fault with a man for conscientiously changing his opinion. If a man is honestly convinced of the falsity of certain opinions, and of the truth of certain other opinions, and if he adjure the former and embrace the latter, so far from condemning him, I should admire his honesty and sincerity.” “But,” he proceeds, “if the man in the case supposed were to change his opinions periodically as he changes his *chapkan* or his *dhutee*; were the fluctuations of his opinions to keep time with the phases of the moon, I should be justified in saying of that man, that he had no fixed principles at all. But what are we to think of men who, while setting themselves up as the religious instructors of the illiterate multitude and the reformers of their country, are not agreed among themselves as to the very foundations of their faith?—who make organic changes in their religious principles in the course of every five years?—and modify their theological belief according to the fashion of every varying hour? Can you have confidence in such men? Whatever others may do, for myself, I confess, I can have no confidence in such men. Such religious weather-cocks do not suit me. They are like those, described by an old writer, who were ‘carried about by every wind of doctrine.’ I like the rock on which I can tread firmly and securely. I do not like the drifting, the treacherous sand. A religion of fluctuating opinions is no religion at all. For what *is* religion? Is it not that which binds us in duty and in love to our Father and our God? But how can a congeries of loose and ever-shifting opinions *exert any the least influence upon our conduct?*”

Gentlemen, I apprehend that the passage I have read to you when applied to the Brahmo Somaj appears self-contradictory, as the principle which the Lecturer lays down in the first two sentences runs counter to what follows. Had he only said, "I would be the last man in the world to find fault with a person for conscientiously changing his opinions," one would have admired his magnanimity. That changes have taken place in the Brahmo Somaj is a matter that nobody gainsays ; but it is astonishing how the Lecturer glides on from the fact, that changes have taken place in the Somaj to the exposition of the case of a man who changes his opinion periodically without any religious principle ! (*Hear, hear.*) The question is not whether any change did take place, but what was the spirit in which the change was undergone. Now, that is the question which I should very much like the enemies of the Somaj to answer. Did the Somaj ever change its theological opinion for any motive of party or interest, for mere fashion's sake? Can it be said that the changes that have taken place did not take place conscientiously and as the workings of conscience alone? (*Deafening applause.*) Gentlemen, I admit the charge of change, but I scout the charge of fluctuations. I believe, and shall prove presently, that the Somaj has changed its opinion "conscientiously," and deserves credit for "honesty and sincerity."

The Vedic doctrines, which were believed at one time, remained only so long as they were considered conformable to reason ; the moment it was discovered that some of them were erroneous and fallacious, then rose up the Somaj, and with conscience as its guide, flung away what was erroneous and fallacious, and retained what it conscientiously believed to be true. This is pro-

gress, Gentlemen, and not fluctuation. (*Hear, hear*) Do the changes, I ask, that have taken place in the Brahmo Somaj resemble the constant and ceaseless fluctuations of the boisterous sea, the alternating ebb and flow of the tide, or the onward march of progress? (*Hear, hear.*) If it can be proved that the Brahmo Somaj, like a ship on the ocean, without rudder or compass, has been incessantly tossed up and down the waves of controversy and carried to and fro by the breeze of opinion:—if it can be proved, I say, that the Brahmo Somaj, after professing certain opinions, changed them, adopting others quite the contrary, then abjured them and went back to the opinions it first held, then threw off these a second time and betook itself to others more erroneous:—if it can be proved that the movements of the Somaj were like the reelings of a drunkard or the eccentricities of an idiot:—if, indeed, this could be proved, then certainly I would admit, in reference to the creed of the Brahmo Somaj, it is “a congeries of loose and ever-shifting opinions,” which “cannot exert any the least influence upon our conduct.” (*Deafening applause.*) But, Gentlemen, is every step towards truth to be stigmatised with the term “fluctuation?” Is the advance of progress to be styled the opinions “of every varying hour?” The career of the Brahmo Somaj has been one of progress, not of progress and retrogression, but steady, onward progress—a career of conscientious conviction and belief in spite of all inducements to conservatism. (*Hear, hear.*) Doubtless, it is very hard to repudiate long standing usages; associations of old institutions, however ridiculous or obnoxious, are often-times irresistible; old laws, old customs, privileges stick to us with unflinching tenacity; yet, by the grace of God, the

Brahmo Somaj, as soon as it arrived at the conviction that a particular opinion was not right, immediately abjured it—that very moment the opinion was drowned with the cry, “Away with it, away with it.” (*Deafening applause.*)

Gentlemen, in reviewing the history of the Somaj, we find that in the earlier times the Vedas were held as the divine and infallible guide in matters of religion, and all Vedic doctrines received at least tacit acquiescence. In the succeeding age, we find the basis of Brahmoism to be the Revelation of nature. Thus undoubtedly there has been an important change in the basis of the creed of the Brahmo Somaj; and its history embraces two distinct periods. But it is the fashion with many to urge that there have been daily and hourly changes, so that to count upon any particular doctrine with certainty is impossible. In the words of the Lecturer, the Brahmos “make organic changes in their religious principles in the course of every five years, and modify their theological belief according to the fashion of every varying hour”—as if there have been endless doctrinal changes and epochs in the history of our Church and that there never was anything like *principle* in it. (*Hear, hear—deafening applause—a single dissentient voice.*) I am here, Gentlemen, and in the name of open, unreserved and free discussion, I challenge any one here present to come forward and prove that the Brahmo Somaj is guilty of capriciously modifying its belief, without any fixed principle, according to the fashion of every varying hour. I challenge you to come forward: if you like, accept the challenge. (*No one steps forward.*) That will do. (*Outbursts of applause.*) I have said that during the first period the Somaj believed in the Vedas as an infallible authority, as the letter of Babu Debendra

Nath Tagore, published in *The Englishman*, bears testimony. That was the age of Vedantism, or the religion of the One God, as set forth in the Vedas. In such books as "Vedantic Doctrines Vindicated," you will at once find that the creed upheld was Vedantism, and not Natural Religion, except so far as the worship of the One True God was concerned. It is not very difficult to assign the time when Vedantism fell. It was after the return of the four Pandits from Benares, the "holy" seat of Vedic lore, whither they had been sent for the purpose of being indoctrinated in the knowledge of Vedas, that a change came over the religious belief of the Brahmo Somaj. These four gentlemen studied the four Vedas respectively for about two years, and returned after having acquired a pretty good knowledge of Vedic theology. With their assistance Babu Debendro Nath Tagore instituted a close and rigorous examination into the doctrines inculcated in the Vedas. Hitherto, the Vedas had exercised absolute and undisputed authority as an Vedic ascendancy. The result of the investigations of Babu Debendro Nath Tagore and the four Pundits proved fatal to the Vedas. Where all was thought to be truth, and nothing but the truth, there now appeared creeping out errors and fallacies. What once was supposed to be wholly true was now found to be partially so. Such was the work which Babu Debendro Nath Tagore consummated by directing his natural reason manfully to the exposition of the Vedas. Thus the Vedas were deprived of their assumed prerogative of infallibility; thus Vedantism fell to the ground, and the religion of the Brahmo Somaj became Natural Religion. Gentlemen, I have given you the *time*, and you perhaps want to know the immediate *cause* of this transition: you will perhaps ask me

why is it, and how came it to be, that only after the return of the four Pundits, the authority of the Vedas was shaken, and this natural Intuition of yours that you glory in revealed itself for the first time? Gentlemen, my answer is plain. That the Vedas were permitted so long to reign with supreme authority seated on the throne of infallibility, and were not deposed earlier, was owing to ignorance, Gentlemen,—ignorance rather than conviction resulting from a full knowledge of the subject. I say, the moment, through proper inquiry, conviction dawned in the mind of Babu Debendro Nath Tagore, that moment was consummated the downfall of Vedantism; there was no doubt, no wavering, but instant action, determined and effectual. The particulars of the transition may be briefly related. Babu Debendro Nath Tagore one day accidentally fell in with a stray leaf of a Sanskrit book (the *Ishopanished*.) He naturally felt anxious to know what it was, but alas! the characters were unintelligible to him, as he was a stranger to Sanskrit literature. He therefore had recourse to a Pundit and got the passage explained by him; he was so much impressed with its excellence, that he at once applied himself to the study of Sanskrit. How precious must that volume be, he said within himself, of which this passage is but a fragment! He was indefatigable in his studies and researches, and he made considerable progress, his heart anticipating the greatest joy, and his enthusiasm doubled up to the straining point, for the time was approaching when he should be able to dip into that ocean of saving truth, a few drops of whose water had done him so much good. The more he read, the greater was his joy, the greater was the progress of his soul in truth and piety. With a view to spread a knowledge of the

theology of the Vedas among his countrymen, he sent four Pundits to Benares, of whom I have said before, to be initiated in the Vedas, in order that they might disseminate far and wide that saving knowledge of the One True God which had given to him almost a new life. But, alas! little did he know of what was to come; little did he know what that portion of the Vedas was which he had not yet explored! His anticipations were frustrated and instead of joy and hope came bitterness and disappointment! The return of the Pundits and his subsequent investigations with their aid quite convinced him of the errors of the Vedic system. There was a terrible strife—the strife of conscience against associations of mind and place; duty against prepossessions; truth against cherished convictions. But conscience triumphed over all; (*Hear, hear*) the Vedas were thrown overboard by Babu Debendro Nath Tagore; and the Brahmo Somaj bade farewell to Vedantism. (*Hear, hear.*) Gentlemen, would you call this fluctuation? or would you not rather say, that this indeed is a triumph of conscience, and conscience alone—a victory over error and darkness effected by candid inquiry and a love of truth. Would you tauntingly speak of it as the wavering of an *unprincipled* man? Would you point at it the finger of ridicule? Would you not rather “admire the honesty and sincerity” of the Somaj for *conscientiously* changing its opinion? What is there to laugh at in this plain truth: the Brahmos at one time believed in the Vedas as their infallible, unerring guide in religious matters, and now, having found out their mistake, believe in nothing but the truth of Natural Religion? Gentlemen, I would have satisfied myself with a few passing remarks only on this untenable charge of fluctuation did I not think it proper to

lay bare what the Lecturer would fain wish were permitted to lie underneath the surface :—I mean the motive which brought about the change in the basis of the creed of the Somaj, and the progressive character of that change. Gentlemen, I have shown clearly, I hope, that it was conscience that sent the Brahmo Somaj one further step up the hill of progress. Vedantic Brahmoism was a conscientious renunciation of Puranic idolatry and intuition-al Brahmoism a conscientious overthrow of the infallible authority of the Vedas. In the history of the Brahmo Somaj you thus behold Progress and Principle. You will also admit, I hope, from what I have said in regard to the circumstances which brought about the fall of Vedantism, that this change was due more to the closer study of the Vedas themselves by Babu Debendro Nath Tagore than to the influence of the anti-Christian works of accidental Deists, as has been said ; for though the Vedas were no longer regarded as the basis of Brahmoism, and their errors and absurdities were abjured, the good things in the superstructure were retained and continue to this day : and the *Brahmo Dharma* book of the present day contains the truths of the Vedanta with natural reason for their basis.

I ask you, Gentlemen, whether the charge of fluctuation brought against the Brahmo Somaj by the Lecturer does not apply with full force to the history of Christianity, and, if so, whether, on that ground, Christianity is to be called "no religion." Come, Gentlemen, and I will show you different "phases" of Christianity. I will accompany you to lands and times where and when you would find things quite different from what you see at present in enlightened Christendom. I will show you when heresies and schisms and sects

unworthy of the name of Christianity,—aye, many of them abominable, triumphed in the very centre of Christendom. But is that any reason that I should argue that Christianity is wholly untrue? No; you would immediately say—look at the Reformed Churches. And so with the religion we profess. If the past history of Brahmoism is to be brought as an argument condemnatory of its pure character to-day, then indeed might we bring forward the early history of Christianity to condemn Christianity, because, in past ages, it underwent changes, doctrinal and practical, against reason and common sense—changes even in the essential articles of faith. Consider the case of the Adamites, that irreligious and immoral race, among whom adultery prevailed to an alarming extent; yes, their horribly corrupt practices had the sanction of their Christianity, by which they supposed they had been restored to a state of innocence in which they might wantonly revel in licentiousness. In their creed, lust and incest were no sins, marriage a superfluity, and adultery and unreserved voluptuousness quite innocent. Again, if at this day we travel from England to Rome, we would see just as striking a change as when we travel from this “city of palaces” to the holy city of Benares, the very citadel of idolatry. In Rome, we have in the person of the Pope something at once unique and absurd, and in the creed of Popish religion a blending of gross superstition and truth, unsurpassed and unaccountable. We then come to the United States of America. In the Southern States, slavery, that bane of mankind, that accursed evil, is not only tolerated, but supported and vindicated by, extracts from the Bible. (*Cries of No. no.*) I say, Gentlemen, it is undeniable that slavery has received encouragement from Christian ministers

in America—the Bible has been pressed to the service of the upholders of that monster evil. (*Cries of No, no, show us the passage.*) Open the Bible and you will see. The fact I have alluded to is a stubborn fact and cannot be gainsaid. Gentlemen, you thus see different ages and countries all professing Christianity, yet, at the same time, following such an unaccountable variety of doctrines and practices, as to render it impossible to state precisely what Christianity is, in spite of the alleged fixedness of the Bible, or which sect will enter the “Kingdom of Heaven.” Far from observing uniformity, we behold innumerable sects, such as the Gnostics, the Adamites, the Quakers, the Protestants, the Roman Catholics, the Trinitarians, &c.—we see *countless changes*; so that it cannot be admitted that Christianity has continued unchanged amid political, social and philosophical revolutions in all the periods of its history; and yet, I ask you, are we to condemn Christianity, because it has undergone so many changes? We have reverence for the precepts of Christ Jesus, and we are fully aware of the wonders achieved in modern times by Christian nations. Observe the marvellous works of art accomplished by them; look at their canals and bridges and railways and steam-engines. Look at India, how, in the hands of a Christian Government, she has been adorned and blessed with numerous useful institutions; look at her mills and manufactories; look at her schools and colleges: all these were introduced by Christian zeal and energy, by Christian gentlemen. All honor to them! Neither our reverence for the truths of the Bible, nor our gratitude to Christian people is impaired by the fact of Christianity having undergone changes in the course of its historical development. Because we

find so many changes in the religion of the Christians, am I to exclaim in the words of the Lecturer—"Whatever others may do, for myself I confess I can have no confidence in such men. Such religious weather-cocks do not suit me." (*Hear, hear.*) Wherever there is progress and the spirit of truth, there can be nothing to be ashamed of; there can be no scope for ridicule, satire or vituperation.

It has been said that Parker and Newman and the Brahmo Somaj are guilty of stealing God's truths from the Bible and passing them off as their own ideas. Pilfering God's truths!! Why, the thing is absurd. Is the Lecturer in jest, or is he serious? If he is serious, I say—do not tarry, but forthwith run after the thieves, the roguish pilferers, the audacious robbers of God's truths—I say, run after them, bring them before the High Court of Theology, and then alas! what should be the fate of these unfortunate miscreants—these pilferers of God's truths? why, they shall be sentenced to be incarcerated in the Great Jail of—*Salvation!!* (*Deafening applause—cries of Hear, hear.*) Yes, the Jail of Salvation, for having made the best use of the truths of the Bible. Their crime is heinous, and must be adequately punished: they have sung with David his beautiful psalms; they have responded to the stirring exhortations of Jesus. Yes, for all this their sin is grievous; they stand before us convicted—dishonest pilferers of God's truth!! (*Thundering applause.*)

No shame, Gentlemen, that we should call men like Parker, pilferers of God's truths in this sense. Theodor Parker, Francis Newman, and others have studied the Bible, but their occupation is not to pass off the truths which they found in the Bible as discoveries of their own mind, but as God's

TRUTHS, as truths written by Him on the heart : they have not circulated them as truths coined in their own mint with the impress of Messrs. Parker, Newman & Co., but they have spread them as the truths of God with the stamp of divinity on their face. If Christianity is not the truly benevolent mother that would have the whole world seek protection under the wings of God's truths—universal and natural truths common to all—then perish Christianity ! All truth is God's truth, and therefore common to us all ; as coming from our Common Father it becomes our common property, and we are privileged by birthright to use it, wherever it may be found. (*Hear, hear.*) Why then this trash ? Why all this fuss about pilfering God's truth, as if a copy-right existed of this same God's truth in the General Assembly's Institution ! Why then all this ridicule ? Truth is no more European than Asiatic, no more Biblical than Vedic, no more Christian than Heathen : it is no more yours than mine. Because intuitive truths are in the Bible, it does not follow that they belong exclusively to an "elect" race, and that the rest of mankind have no right to use them. Because those truths tally with natural reason, consist with the voice of nature within, follows that every man has right to use them, for they are God's truths, they are the truths of nature. (*Hear, hear.*)

Gentlemen, I desire to say a few words on the charge of arrogance and self-sufficiency which has of late been frequently advanced against the Somaj. The Brahmos are arrogant and conceited men, and their religion is essentially a creed of self-sufficiency :—this gratuitous assumption, if it shows anything, evinces the sad ignorance of those who are bent on vilifying the Brahmo Somaj, of the nature of our creed. Let them say what they please,

and charge us with arrogance ever so long, the character of our church remains unaffected under their feeble attacks. Gentlemen, if the Brahmo Somaj inculcates one principle more than another in the minds of its followers, that principle is humility. Humility is one of the vital principles of the religion of the Brahmos. If there is any man here truly impressed with the spirit of inquiry let him, after a cool and dispassionate perusal of our sermons and theological discourses, and a careful enquiry into the character and morals of the Brahmos, say whether they are a set of conceited and arrogant men. To say that Brahmoism inculcates self-sufficiency is to say an untruth. That religion is not and cannot be a religion of arrogance and self-sufficiency which acknowledges prayer to be indispensable to faith and salvation. Prayer is the very pedestal on which, it must be admitted, Brahmoism rests : it is a Brahmo's only hope, his only guide in the world. And what is prayer but the mother of sincerity, humility and meekness ? Let it not be said then that we Brahmos are conceited and arrogant men : that we believe our souls to be self-sufficient ! We admit as fully as any body else the imperfections of man, his weakness and his liability to sin, and the impossibility of mere human agency to secure salvation. We firmly believe that He, who is our Creator, is the only Dispenser of salvation. From Him, and Him alone, we hope to receive the spiritual blessings we are in need of. To Him, who is the God of Love, of Truth, of Salvation, Brahmoism teaches us to pray humbly and earnestly. Pray without ceasing, pray day and night, and knowledge, piety, strength and faith shall abound in life : such is the voice of our religion. But how different is the picture of it drawn by our

friends? Brahmoism makes salvation depend upon the unaided faculties and energies of man, and a Brahmo is taught to believe that he is omniscient, infallible, and self-sufficient ! That is simply a ludicrous caricature. A Brahmo is but a man, and Brahmic nature but human nature. Certainly the Brahmo Somaj is strong, but its strength cometh from the Lord ; it trusts not to kings or princes ; its dependence is placed on prayer ; its doctrines are imperishable, immutable truths, which are sufficient for salvation, but these truths are revealed by the Lord through natural reason. A Brahmo is an humble child of the God of truth ; a prayerful worshipper of the God of salvation. Meekness is the ornament of a Brahmic soul, trusting and absolute reliance on God its life-blood. Gentlemen, I say with emphasis, that the Brahmo Somaj is above the charge of arrogance ; the Brahmos have not the remotest idea of self-sufficiency. If faults you discover in them, and faults they have many, raise your admonishing voice, and the Brahmos will listen with child-like docility. But do not, for your own sakes, for the sake of truth, call the Brahmos a set of arrogant and presumptuous men, who are eaten up with conceit, and ignore, theoretically and practically, the necessity of Divine aid. Humble yet firm in reliance on the aid of God, weak yet strong in the assurance of Divine mercy, the Brahmo Somaj has always progressed with prayer in one hand and conscience in the other, and for each step it has taken in the path of progress, it has chanted glory unto God.

We come now to the subject of Intuition. Those who have studied with some degree of attention the phenomena of Christian polemics in Bengal of late must bear testimony to the fact that there has been a general attempt to laugh away the basis of Brahmic

theology. Intuition, Intuition, Intuition, is the cry everywhere. Christian Missionaries, and even convert lads who have no philosophic knowledge have been heard to speak of it in the most taunting fashion, as if it were mere trash ! They make merry with the word Intuition. In fact, the grossest misconceptions prevail here in regard to the true nature of the Intuition. Intuition, says one, will give the Brahmo not only salvation but food to eat, water to drink, clothes to put on, gas-lights and a conservancy system. And I know not what else ! it is a Hollloway Pill which remedies all their complaints ! (*Hear, hear.*) Intuition, says another, is but another name for omniscience, and it will make the Brahmos so many gods ! Where the spirit of such sweeping sarcasms does not reign, it is gravely insinuated that Intuition is a fallacy, a figment of the imagination, the hobby of the youngsters of Jorasanko, something not consistent with philosophy, a peculiar dogma of Brahmic brains !

Gentlemen, as this subject is of vital importance to us as affecting the very basis of our theology, it is necessary to consider whether this Intuition is really what it has been represented to be, an irrational crotchet of the unphilosophical wittings of Jorasanko. Is Intuition inconsistent with philosophy ? Is common sense no doctrine of true psychology ? It may not be strictly right to treat the subject philosophically before a mixed audience like this, but still, since the Lecturer lays some stress on common sense, I think I shall not be going out of my course if I say a few words on the philosophy of common sense. Sir William Hamilton, in his edition of Reid's Works (Appendix A.), treats on the doctrine of common sense in the most philosophical way, and proves its validity on the accumulated testimonies of innumerable philosophers of ancient, as

well as modern times ; and it will at once appear that the common sense we speak of is not the common thing used in worldly transactions which the Lecturer speaks of. When people talk of common sense, it seems easy enough—it is to be found in every corner and bye-lane and market-place. But in philosophy, common sense has a deeper signification than the Lecturer seems to know. Common sense is one thing and the philosophy of Common sense is quite another thing. The philosophical doctrine of common sense is not the common sense said to be picked up in the streets, but the psychological evolution of the truths and principles of intuitive consciousness. You will also find in Reid's works an elaborate dissertation on this very common of common things, common sense, and you will no doubt be struck with the difference between the common sense of the Lecturer and that which is the basis of our religion.

Our object in upholding and vindicating the doctrine of common sense is, that we want to substantiate the intuitive truths which constitute the first principles of our religion by an appeal to psychology. These intuitive truths may be demonstrated to be veritable facts of intuitive consciousness, for philosophy, in so far as it is a legitimate exposition of our natural cognitions, cannot be at variance with Natural Religion ; on the contrary, the philosophy of intuitive consciousness, or the doctrine of common sense, involves the philosophy of Natural Religion. Impressed with these ideas, we have made inquiries and researches, and the result has always been a firm conviction that whatever different schools and sects of philosophy might say, the voice of true and catholic philosophy is all but conclusive as to the validity of the essential truths of Natural Religion. Besides the two great philosophers already

named, several distinguished thinkers, such as Kant, Cousin, Morell, M'Cosh, have clearly admitted the existence of natural and catholic truths or common sense in the human mind, not deducible from, but anterior to, reasoning. An outline of the first truths of ethics you will find in that popular work, Abercrombie's "Moral Feelings," used in the lower classes of our colleges. In fact, all philosophy is but a striving after Intuition, and the history of philosophy unmistakeably proves that mental science is gradually coming round to the unity of doctrine of common sense. If you study the history of philosophy, you will no doubt find that, though the philosophical world has been pulverized into numerous sects maintaining different and sometimes contradictory opinions, humanity, on the whole, has been progressing towards a system of catholic philosophy. The only true explanation which may be given of the endless variations and wide diversities of philosophical theories lies in the fact that philosophy was not originally established on first truths, that either these truths were ignored, or assumptions and wild vagaries of imagination were held as necessary and constitutional truths. Sensationalism, Idealism, Scepticism, and Mysticism promulgated their contending doctrines and landed in absurdities in consequence of their departure from Intuition. They rambled this way and that way in quest of truth and though some truth there was in each, yet differences there were many, for they recognised not the common truths of mind, on the platform of which alone catholic philosophy can be upreared. Thanks to Reid, Hamilton, and others, the validity of common sense has been scientifically established, and its revelations held to be indisputable and incontrovertible. The inauguration of eclectic philosophy is already a fact in the philosophical world,

and serves to inspire us with the hope that, side by side with catholic philosophy, will reign catholic religion, that natural religion and natural psychology will triumphantly rise in harmony from the conflicts of contending sects.

In vindicating the doctrine of Intuition, I am far from insinuating that the views of the philosophers who uphold it exactly tally with our own. This much I desire to assert that in some form, under some name, and to some extent, Intuition has been admitted to be a fact of consciousness by almost all distinguished thinkers. Different names have been given to it, such as spontaneous reason, practical reason, *a priori* cognitions, common sense, first truths, corresponding with the particular characteristics of Intuition, specially recognised by the philosophers who gave those names, such as spontaneity, catholicity, originality, &c. But such differences of opinion in regard to name are immaterial so long as the existence of Intuition is admitted. Nor would it at all affect the argument to say, that those whose testimonies we cite were Christians, and cannot be supposed to have said anything in support of our religion. The question is not whether any of the philosophers I have mentioned sanctioned Brahmoism, but whether Intuition is a philosophic fact or not. I shall prove hereafter that the religious truths which Intuition reveals to us are likewise *saving* truths.

The doctrine of common sense is, therefore, not only true philosophy but catholic philosophy; it is not the peculiar doctrine of a peculiar sect, not an ingenious theory invented by Jorasanko "witlings" to give a dignified aspect to their peculiar theology, but the unity of philosophic truths, a code of universal beliefs supported by the testimony of consciousness. You cannot ignore first truths,

they are above cavilling; all the scoffings and sarcasms of Calcutta Christianity will not be able to exterminate them. Unassailable, then, is that system of religion which stands upon first truths. To say that our church rests upon Intuition is to say that it rests upon an immoveable rock which the wind of opinion cannot shake, the blast of controversy cannot demolish. For, if the Intuitions are veritable facts of consciousness, the same must be predicated of religious Intuitions. The religious truths which constitute the foundation of a Theist's creed, inasmuch as they are intuitive, challenge the unquestioning assent of every philosophical mind; they carry in them the authority of nature and the stamp of Divine Author. The Reverend Principal Tulloch, a distinguished Christian philosopher of the present age, has given a beautiful exposition, in his prize-essay on Theism, of *a priori* or intuitive evidence of God and His attributes. With wondrous clearness, and in the most scientific manner, he has drawn out a complete set of proofs from intuitive consciousness in support of Theism or Natural Religion, and has proved successfully that the human mind intuitively, and "*independently of written revelation*," arrives at the knowledge of God as the Infinite Creator of the universe, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Eternal, All-holy and All-good, the Supreme Moral Governor. If it is admitted, then, that these fundamental truths of our faith are the revelations of Intuition, not the results of Bible-reading, not the conclusions of reasoning deduced exclusively from external data, but truths implanted by God in the mind and constituting the original furniture of every soul, I challenge any one to philosophically redargue the basis of our religion. I invite, Gentlemen, your *special* attention to the valuable, work of Tulloch,

and I assure you that if you study it, any amount of pains you might bestow upon it would be amply repaid. Those who have studied that book, will, I am sure, admit that "Brahmic Intuition," far from being a Brahmic crotchet, is a fact of philosophy even in a Christian point of view. If it is true, then, that the fundamental truths of Theism are the first truths or Intuitions, who is there in this assembly that would venture to speak aught against the basis of Brahmoism? *Hear, hear.*) It has been falsely inferred from the fact of our attaching so much importance to intuitive truths, that Intuition is the whole of our religion—that we Brahmos are born with a full and complete system of theology and ethics engraven on the heart—yea, that our Intuition is co-extensive with truth, and that we know everything! It has been said in several quarters that we are above all external influences, above books and teachers; and our Intuition is "omniscient!" It is indeed humiliating to take notice of such caricatures, advisedly and foolishly got up to ridicule our church. Intuition is simply the *basis* of our religion, the *primary source* of our religious knowledge: this knowledge, again, lies potentially in the human mind, and needs awakening in order to be revealed and apprehended in actual consciousness; hence arises the necessity of external influences, as occasions for calling forth the latent intuitions of the mind. We are far from believing that these influences *create* intuitive truths, that we have derived them from the Bible or Christian tracts, for they are primitive and underived. Education is necessary, not that it may put Theistic truths into the mind which were not there previously, but that it may develop the truths already existing there, and, with the aid of sound logic, constitute

a complete and scientific system of natural theology. We must reflect, in order that we may evolve intuitive truths, or else they will remain mere potentialities. We are not above education, nor do we ignore the influences of the material world; but certainly we are above the erroneous notion prevalent among our Christian friends, that the intuitive truths of Brahmoism have been derived "directly or indirectly from the Bible": we ignore the dogma of borrowed Intuition. Intuition is our revelation and likewise the evidence of that revelation. The voice of Intuition is the voice of nature, and therefore the voice of truth. I freely acknowledge that we have imperfections; but our faith in the infallible truths of intuitive revelation is strong and firm.

Gentlemen, is it not strange that sensible men in this enlightened age should deny the originality of intuitive ideas of God, and entertain a notion so transparently absurd as this: the Bible is the primitive source of our "conception of God"—the attributes we ascribe to Him, we have learnt from that book—yea "*all* the good that is in Brahmoism is borrowed either directly or indirectly from that Bible!" Such a theory evidently assumes—with what logic I know not—that the belief in Bible-revelation precedes the belief in God, that God must be known to exist *after* the Bible has been admitted to be the word of God!—that His intelligence too must be believed *after* the Bible has been admitted to be a communication of knowledge from Him! Nor do I know how any one can safely open the pages of that book, and accept its doctrines for the purpose of salvation, unless he believes already that God is Good and Holy, and not a deceiver, else every word of that book might be suspected to be a lie and a snare.

Thus the very premises from which the Christians syllogistically draw out their conclusions, *viz.* that the Bible is the Word of God, and whatever it says should be accepted as truth unto salvation,—involve the ideas of a Living God, a God of Intelligence, Goodness and Holiness. Thus even Christianity pre-supposes Intuition, and she ought to be ashamed of those of her ministers who would refer our knowledge of God wholly to written books, and thereby demolish the very pillar of their creed. It is also historically certain that intuitive knowledge of God existed long before the birth of Jesus, long before the Bible came into existence; that pious men in early ages uttered truths which meet with response in the Natural Religion of the present age. It is necessary, therefore, that Christian gentlemen, instead of reiterating the absurd dogma of the fallacy of Intuition or laughing at the basis of our religion; instead, I say, of troubling themselves any more about the real *source* of our religious knowledge, should inquire into the *character* of that knowledge; and, if they are convinced that our ideas of God are true and unobjectionable, let them leave us alone that we may follow Intuition, and worship and serve that One True God whom it reveals in the depths of our consciousness, as the Creator and Saviour of all, the ever-present and living Reality.

True it is, that to Christianity we are, to some extent, indebted for our theology; but this admission does not go to make the Bible the source from which our religious ideas have been borrowed. That the precepts of Christ have exerted marvellous influence on the world no one will deny, nor will it perhaps be doubted that that influence had much to do with the Brahmo Somaj movement in India.

The simple truth is that Christianity is chronologically, but not psychologically, anterior to Brahmoism. The numerous stages of development through which humanity advances are but concatenated links in the chain of progress: the past influences the present, and the present the future. We see to-day the issue of the various events which transpired yesterday, and the seed of the harvest which will be reaped to-morrow. As in philosophy, politics, science, commerce and manufacture, so in theology, the world is moving onward, not backward. That progress may be slow—for as a great thinker has observed, “centuries are but minutes in the history of nations;” still it is steady progress. What the world was in regard to knowledge and civilization, a century ago, appears insignificant when compared with what it is to-day. It is, therefore, no less obvious that a Brahmo of the present day should abjure the errors and prejudices which Socrates or Plato entertained, than that a lad of the General Assembly’s Institution should solve problems in a trice which staggered the mighty intellects of Newton and Galileo. The accumulated learning and experiences of the past are at our service and must guide the world now and hereafter. Hence it is that not only the Brahmo Somaj, but all religious movements of the present age, are immediately, or remotely owing to Christianity and all churches that preceded it. It is impossible for the present age to disclaim all connection with or dependence upon the past: it is impossible for us to deny the strong claims which Christianity has upon our gratitude. Honour, all honour to Christ Jesus for paving the way to civilization;—for the salutary influences of his precepts on the world!—not for the origination of the truths of Brahmoism. Christianity has prepared

the world for the Brahmo Somaj, but has not given birth to Brahmoism.

Gentlemen, the Lecturer, not satisfied with the groundless charges which I have already noticed, proceeded to give the finishing stroke to his caricature of the Brahmos. Whether in the fury of indignation, or the exuberance of blind zeal, or the recklessness of inveterate antipathy, he informed the public, without the slightest scruple or hesitation, that the Brahmos, in regard to ever-shifting opinions, are second only to Atheists ! Really, this is an outrage on our feelings and consciences. Lives there a Brahmo who could submit to such an insulting comparison, such a grave impeachment on his character ? Like Atheists we change our opinions ! Atheism likened to Theism ! (*Hear, hear.*) What Atheism, killing Atheism, compared to life-giving Brahmoism ! What resemblance. Atheism bears to Brahmoism, I am at a loss to understand. As well might you compare darkness to light and untruth to truth. Has Brahmoism ever denied the existence of God ? Has it ever given up the worship of the God of Salvation ? Is there anything in it like the untrammelled recklessness of an Atheist ? Really, there is something preposterously absurd in the assertion : "if license of unbounded speculation be a mark of the liberality of a creed, then it must be confessed that the creed of the Atheist is the most liberal in the world ; and to the creed of the Brahmo the second place may justly be assigned." Thus Brahmoism, in respect of "unbounded speculation," is second only to Atheism !—The *liberty* of the former is identical with the *license* of the latter ! Christian Missionaries, do not, for truth's sake, dishonour our sacred church by instituting such vulgar comparisons ; call us anything you like ; tell the world, if

you choose, that we are men-laboring {under some great hallucination, that we are deluded fools, arrogant and self-sufficient men; I say, call us what name you choose, but pray do not for the sake of God, liken us to Atheists—to men who do not believe in the existence of God, who indulge in blasphemy and irreverent scoffings, who scatter moral obligation and the next world to the winds—who, in short, delight in having no principle, (*Hear, hear.*) Rest assured, that our faith in the Holy God is firm and unyielding, no less so our belief that without Him life is but death, and happiness, misery: there is not a little in our creed, I say, of that license which constitutes Atheism. Christian friends! rebuke us for our failings, chastise us for our sins, extend to us your helping hand, and lead us to piety and truth, teach us to love God the more, we shall listen to you with all humility, but never oh! never, compare us to Atheists. Rather subject me to the most excruciating tortures and drag life out of me than compare my religion to Atheism. (*Hear hear—deafening applause.*)

Gentlemen, I now proceed to consider the arguments advanced against our Theory of Atonement and salvation. I believe the Lecturer, while expatiating on the mode in which the Brahmos seek expiation of their sins, gave a rather imperfect picture of Brahmic repentance. We do believe that repentance is atonement, but that repentance is not the lip-repentance he speaks of, but genuine, sincere repentance. What is repentance? Is it a mere confession of sin?—Is it saying to God, I have committed sin, be pleased to forgive me?—Is it a mere promise of future repentance, which says eat, drink, and be merry to-day, to-morrow be sorry, and think of Heaven? Does Brahmoism

say to the sinner,—Grovel in the mire of iniquity to-day, to-morrow repent and rise? No, far from it. That is Brahmic repentance which fills the soul with the intense agonies and insufferable pangs of remorse; which burns like the “hell-fires” of the Poet, and consumes peace and joy and gladness; which causes restless days and sleepless nights; converts prosperity unto adversity, mid-day light unto mid-night gloom; which continues to torment the sinner here and hereafter, till, in the intensity of agony, he foregoes his sins. That is Brahmic repentance, which by effecting sincere contrition and hatred of sin, actually cures the diseases of the soul, and without which none can be saved. Brahmoism ever and anon says to the sinner—Repent sincerely for the sins you have committed until you can effectually get rid of them, and come to the feet of God, THE GREAT SAVIOUR; and there, prostrating yourself, pray to Him that He may give you strength and faith, and save you from sin. True atonement means to be *at one* with God; true repentance, by delivering us from sin, brings us back to God; hence our belief that “repentance is atonement,” yea, the only atonement possible.

But my Christian friends will ask me, how does a Brahmo reconcile the justice and the mercy of God! We believe that the justice of God requires that the sinner must be punished, and His mercy, on the other hand, demands that the sinner should be saved. Saved from what?—from punishment, replies Christianity. To me this seems unintelligible. You admit that the justice of God must be satisfied with the punishment of the sinner, and, in the same breath, you insist that His mercy must be satisfied by the remission of that punishment! A suicidal theory, indeed. Why, this is tantamount

to saying that the two great attributes of God, justice and mercy, combat and annihilate each other. Justice rises up to punish the sinner for his iniquities ; but mercy, at the same moment, rises up, cuts down justice, and allows the sinner to go unpunished, so that he remains in the same position as before. (*Oheers.*) No, Gentlemen, this is false reasoning. Repentance will save the sinner, says Brahmoism. Save him from what ? Not from the punishment due to sins already committed, for Divine justice is immutable and its decrees irreversible, but save him from sin. You may fabricate a convenient theory of atonement, and do what you like ; bathe in the Hughly, offer sacrifices, go through baptismal ceremonies, visit hundred holy cities,—nothing will save you from the punishment you deserve. The moment you have sinned, justice will rise up and say, “Sinner, thou hast sinned, and must be adequately punished !” Overburdened with iniquity, his conscience upbraiding him, such a sinner repents sincerely—for ages, if need be, till he is liberated from the bondage of sin. Here you see justice and mercy acting in unison. The Lord is Father and Judge both. When the Judge has passed the sentence of punishment, the Merciful Father appears before the sinner, and says : “Suffer the pangs of remorse to the utmost measure for the sin thou hast committed,—repent earnestly,—repent day and night, and thou shalt be delivered from sin.” This is the sum total of the true theory of atonement. A Brahmo is thus taught to believe that the Judge who punishes him for his sins is also his Father, and he drinks the cup of retribution, though bitter, knowing that it cometh from the Father, and containeth not poison, but the medicine that healeth. (*Hear, hear.*) In God’s moral government, justice

makes punishment necessarily and inevitably follow the commission of sin ; mercy makes that punishment remedial, and inflicts it on the sinner for the sake of amendment. Thus, Brahmoism not only reveals God to me in the inmost depths of my heart, but assures me that He whom I worship is my Father and Mother and Saviour ; that He who gives us food and raiment will open the gates of salvation to all who sincerely repent for their sins, humbly pray to Him and conscientiously discharge their duties to Him. When we behold Him in the moral nature, we apprehend not only His Infinite Holiness but His Infinite Goodness, and His moral law appears to us as a law of righteousness as well as goodness. We are thus intuitively taught to worship Him with reverence and love, to obey His moral law consistently and rigidly, and to place thorough reliance on Him. To Him alone we look up for all spiritual blessings—He saveth those who hunger and thirst after salvation.

It has been remarked that the religion of the Brahmos does not teach them to abhor sin. This is a mere assumption. The Brahmos regard sin as an abomination, and detest it from the bottom of their heart. They believe sin to be a violation of the law of the Holy God, a rebellion against the authority of the Supreme Moral Governor. Can the mind conceive anything more awful than ingratitude to the Beneficent Father, Who is the Life of our life, Who supports us on His everlasting arms, Who clothes and feeds us with more than a father's care, with more than a mother's tenderness, and to Whom we owe our body and mind and all the felicities we enjoy, and Who, in spite of our disobedience, ever and anon offers us pardon and salvation, provided we sincerely repent and prayerfully come unto His feet ? Is not

the God of Law, the Friend of the poor, the Hope of the helpless, the Protector of the distressed and, above all, the only Refuge of the sinner? Tell me not, then, that we view the transgression of His law with indifference. Wound not our hearts by saying that we look upon disobedience to the will of such a Father without abhorrence. Oh! how horrid and hateful is sin, how abominable iniquity! How rigid are the injunctions of Brahmoism to turn away from the filthy path of vice, and consecrate the soul wholly and exclusively to truth and God!

Christian Brethren! I humbly beseech you to look upon us in a brotherly spirit. We are all children of the common Father; love and good-will should, therefore, prevail among us always. Whatever our religious opinions may be, we are certainly entitled to your sympathy and affection. If we are wrong, point out our errors; if we have turned astray, show us the true path; if we have violated the law of God, help us with good counsel; but do not, I beseech you, in the name of brotherly love, hate us—do not revile our church, which is dearer to us than life. Give us your affection and we shall give ours; thus there will be a reciprocation of good feelings; and sound advice, by whomsoever imparted, will be gratefully received. Let scandal henceforth be gagged, let invective and vituperation be set aside as unworthy to take part in brotherly communications. Let us all love God as our Father, and man as our brother. (*Hear, hear.*)

To Brahmos around me, I desire to say a few words. Brethren! As worshippers of the God of Love, it is your duty to love all men as your brethren, and to make charity the ruling principle of your heart. Fling away arrogance and pride, and be humble and meek. Prayerfully rely upon the *Lord of Salvation*, for without His aid your strength

will be but as weakness, and the light of your knowledge as darkness. Pray to Him that He may be your light and life and strength. Pray day and night, "pray without ceasing," pray with humility and sincerity and with thorough resignation, and you shall be made strong in the strength of the Lord. Acknowledge your weakness and infirmities, repent earnestly for your sins, and thirst after righteousness ; the God of Salvation will satisfy your thirst. "Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Accept truth wherever you may find it, and whosoever may give it to you, without prejudice ; and act up to it without compromise. Energetically discharge the manifold duties of life, and uphold the banner of truth in the midst of all opposition. In this age of reformation, endeavour to be reformers. Reformer ! that is a proud title indeed ; but the noble and honest ambition to be a reformer ought to find a place in every heart. What, if you cannot promote great reforms ? Reform yourselves, your families and your neighbours ; train up your children in the knowledge of God, and educate your wives and sisters. Manfully direct your energies against caste, and pull down the strongholds of idolatry to the utmost extent of your power. There is before you a wide field for reformation, and you who desire to live as the servants of God, go forth and conscientiously fight the battle till the last day of life. It will not do merely to electrify large meetings with eloquent speeches ; no, each in his humble sphere must set a bright *example* for others to follow. I should not have come here, as I have said, but for the importunate requests of my friends ; for I believe that the Brahmos have a much loftier and nobler object to accomplish in this age

than giving lectures and counter-lectures. A most debasing system of idolatry is stalking over the length and breadth of India, and is doing immense mischief. In the very heart of your families, you will find deep-rooted and pernicious prejudices which it is not easy to overcome. To destroy those should be an object of first importance with you. If, thus, you earnestly and conscientiously discharge your duties to yourselves and to your country, the time will soon come when the battle cry of reform, raised in Bengal, will be resounded in the high regions of the Himalayas and reverberated in Comorin. Lose no time in idle talk or in polemical discussions. A thousand important objects await your attention. The three hours I have spent in addressing you might have been more profitably spent, had we devised some means for female education, or some other work of reform. Go forth, then Brahmo brethren, live and die preaching the truth that is in Brahmoism. Wherever you may go "heart within and God over-head," victory shall fly round your banners. (*Hear, hear—thundering applause.*)

Look up to the Almighty Father and let us pray :—O Lord, to Thee, and Thee alone, we look for aid, for Thou art the God of Salvation, our only Hope in this world of temptation. We pray unto Thee, vouchsafe to enlighten our minds and purify our hearts with Thy love. We have assembled here this evening that we may learn the TRUTH which is in Thee. Teach us to love truth, and give us a strong will that we may live according to it. With all humility we approach Thy divine presence, and we prostrate our souls beneath Thy feet : give us, O Lord, knowledge unto salvation. Good God, have mercy on us.

THE CALCUTTA BRAHMO SCHOOL.

Saturday, 5th May 1867.

It affords me sincere gratification to perform the ceremony of re-opening the Calcutta Brahmo School, not only because, on personal grounds, it is full of pleasant associations, but because, on public grounds, I consider such an institution to be of vast importance to the spiritual welfare of the country and to the progress of the Brahmo Somaj. Most of you are aware, I believe, that nearly eight years ago, under the guidance and with the co-operation of my venerable coadjutor here present, we founded a Sunday School in this city, in connection with the Calcutta Brahmo Somaj. Our object was to bring together a number of young men, and give them a regular course of instructions in Brahmic Theology and Ethics. Week after week I and my coadjutor used to deliver lectures on these subjects, which, I must say, were duly appreciated by our auditors and conduced to their mental and moral improvement. We had every reason to congratulate ourselves on the fruits of our humble labours, which even exceeded our most sanguine expectations. Of about fifty regular students more than twenty creditably passed the periodical examinations, obtained testimonials of proficiency, and went forth into the world with

sound ideas of religion and morality, lofty aspirations and an improved tone of thought and character, of which they have since given abundant proofs in their daily intercourse with the world. Through them and others who used to attend the School only now and then, a salutary influence was also produced on the Brahmo community in general. Some of the ex-students have also become missionaries of our holy faith, and are engaged in communicating to others those truths in which they had been originally indoctrinated in the School, and which they subsequently developed by their own mature reflection and practical experience. I am glad to see some of them before me. It cannot be denied, therefore, that the School was a success. However, it was closed after three years, as the course of instructions was finished, and the immediate object of the School seemed to have been accomplished in regard to the existing pupils. The idea of opening a new class of pupils at the end of the final year and repeating our instructions, with a view to train up a fresh batch of young men, did not occur to us at the time. Several important events, however, have since transpired, which have impressed us with the necessity of reviving this useful institution. You are no doubt aware of the immense progress made by the Brahmo Somaj of late, in Bengal as well as in the North-western Provinces, the Punjab and Madras. The number of Theists and Theistic Somajes has steadily increased, and a great religious agitation is strikingly manifest on all sides, which is destined to settle, in the fulness of time, into a mighty Theistic organization. This progress is owing partly to English education, and partly to the numerous tracts, books and periodicals published by the metropolitan and provincial Brahmo Somajes, and to the

exertions of our itinerant missionaries who have been preaching the doctrines of our faith for the last four years in different parts of the country. In the midst of these cheering indications of progress Calcutta appeared of late to be in a comparatively neglected condition. While our preachers were propagating Brahmo Dharma far and wide in the mofussil and in other and remote provinces, our mission was all but closed in the metropolis—the primitive seat of Brahmic movement. This was indeed painful to contemplate; the more so as Calcutta being the centre of native improvement should occupy a permanent and prominent place in our mission field, so that we may draw constant accessions from the ranks of the alumni of our schools and colleges, and render education, what it ought to be, a stepping-stone to religious improvement. Is it not a matter of grave regret that there is no public institution in this city for disseminating truths of Brahmo Dharma among our educated young men? I admit isolated attempts are now and then made in this direction by private individuals according to leisure, inclination and convenience, either in the shape of imparting instructions or merely lending books to such as come forward as inquirers; but there is no institution where young men may resort and receive systematic religious and moral training. Such a want has been long felt, in fact ever since the Brahmo School was abolished. But never was it so forcibly felt as at present, when the tendencies of our leading educational institutions have become alarmingly prejudicial to the spiritual interests of the rising generation of our countrymen.

I am fully alive to the importance and expediency of the policy of religious neutrality on which Government education is based. For wise

and benevolent purposes that policy was laid down, and it is necessary that it should be strictly adhered to in all schools and colleges under direct Governmental management. It is not only sound and unimpeachable on political grounds but also acceptable to all religious denominations, being based on the principle of toleration. Secular education in itself is not defective or injurious : on the contrary, it is highly useful, so far as it goes, as it affords us a fund of valuable truths for our mental improvement and our guidance in this world. We may disapprove of it on the score of its incompleteness—for it cultivates only the intellectual powers and neglects our religious interests,—and who would not like to see education tending to the development of the whole being ? But still it must be confessed—and I would bear testimony from my own experience—that liberal education, though strictly secular, if kept within legitimate bounds, must be beneficial, especially when it comprises the mental and moral sciences. Although, however, I am ready to support the principle of religious neutrality in Government schools, I must declare my vigorous protest against undue advantage being taken of it by the tutors. If it is impolitic and wrong to teach any particular creed in Government schools, it is morally reprehensible to rush to the other extreme, and by teaching materialism and scepticism sap the very foundations of morality and religion. All that the rule of neutrality requires of teachers is that they should simply abstain from sectarian teaching ; but it gives them neither privilege nor power to wantonly and recklessly destroy the very religious instincts and sentiments of their pupils by false philosophy and false logic. Not to teach any specific religion is one thing ; to teach irreligion and scepticism is quite a different thing ;

the former is negative and innocuous ; the latter is positively mischievous,—alike hostile to the liberal policy of the State and the moral interests of the alumni, and repugnant to the feelings of all classes of the community, of whatever religious persuasion they may be. It is impossible to calculate the mischief arising from the systematic and unreserved inculcation of materialism in a Government college. And yet this has gone on year after year without a check or a protest. Its evil effects have now assumed such formidable proportions that further connivance is impossible. Amongst the advanced students materialism has found many advocates and followers. They belong to no religious denomination, and when questioned as to their real views of theology and ethics, spout forth the stereotyped phases of thorough-going materialism. Not a few set themselves up as staunch advocates of Utilitarianism and Positivism, boastfully extol the philosophic beauty and grandeur of these systems, and scoff at religion as a congeries of idle fancies and childish whims. It is a pity they do not understand the dangerous position they occupy. For what are Utilitarianism, Positivism, Materialism, Fatalism, and all other *isms* of the Sensationalistic School, but different species of philosophic worldliness, and who are their adherents but worldly-minded men who live for the senses, seek only worldly interests, deny all the spiritual realities which are above and beyond the animal life, and who, with a view to attach the weight of philosophic sanction to their speculations and practices, take one or other of these big philosophic names. It is to be deeply regretted that our countrymen should thus be led away by false philosophy to sacrifice their true spiritual interests, and casting off the restraint of moral obligation,

expose themselves to all the temptations and perils of unbridled worldliness. There are some who do not take worldliness to be so dangerous as it really is, for they find it not necessarily incompatible with honesty and even philanthropy and charity. A little reflection will, however, show that the spirit of worldliness is antagonistic to the first principles of religion, and when invested with philosophic importance, is likely to prove pernicious and demoralizing in the extreme. I must confess that the evils I complain of are not confined to our colleges, nor are they wholly attributable to the influence of the teachers. Materialistic and sceptical notions, in some shape or other, prevail largely, at the present day, amongst various sections of our community, here and in the mofussil, and some of our intelligent countrymen take active interest in encouraging and spreading the same. In the majority of cases such notions are merely the result of worldly-mindedness. They are also specially fostered by the transition-state through which the country is passing, and which daily draws away hundreds from idolatry and superstition without giving them any positive faith in exchange, and thus lands them in scepticism. All this, however, might be tolerated as being to some extent inevitable. But when Government institutions offer a premium to materialism and systematically and with the weight of authority inculcate it in youthful minds; when those to whom we naturally look up with high hopes for the advancement of our nation—I mean the graduates of our University—go forth into the world with academic honours in one hand and scepticism in another; when education, instead of being a safeguard against ungodliness, directly encourages and promotes it;—we feel that our country's best interests and prospects are in

jeopardy. Hence is it that those who take an interest in the welfare of the country have viewed with alarm the progress of materialism and scepticism amongst the graduates of our University. And certainly, they have a right to demand a higher order of intelligence and character from men blessed with liberal education. They have a right to demand that educated Natives should not glory in denying the spirituality, immortality and accountability of the human soul, and in professing and practising that philosophy which dooms man to the low indulgences of sensual life and denies him the prerogatives and happiness of the moral nature; but that, on the contrary, they should endeavour to prove themselves in every respect worthy of the honour which the State has conferred on them, of the confidence and respect of their own countrymen by exhibiting unblemished character, fervent piety, and humble reliance upon God, side by side with their intellectual accomplishments.

But how is the needful reform to be brought about? What is to be done to prevent scores of our educated brothers from falling every year into the vortex of scepticism and materialism and to lead them to truth, righteousness and God? In such circumstances the revival of the Brahmo School is evidently indispensable. I do not mean to say that it will be able wholly to overcome the gigantic evil referred to. But I hope and trust that in the hands of Providence, it may become an humble instrument to suppress it in some measure—to offer some resistance to the encroachments of materialistic philosophy. In a case of overwhelming difficulties and importance like this we cannot place any confidence in our own limited capacities or in any purely human agency. God is our only hope, and we trust He will do what is best for our country

in this crisis, through this small institution which we consign wholly to His keeping. Under His holy guidance it will teach the sublime doctrines of true faith and the immutable principles of morality, and will prove that true philosophy, far from being inimical to, is the foundation of, religion and morality. It will also, we hope, be of service to our young men in leading them practically to that higher life to which they are destined, by giving them a true ideal of manhood and adequate motives for realizing it. Here, Gentlemen, your minds, hearts and souls will be carried through such systematic exercise and training as may bring about the proper development of your whole spiritual nature. Here the struggles between reason and faith will be adjusted and the two harmoniously engaged in the service of God. Your secular enlightenment will be rendered conducive to the purification of your heart and the elevation of your character. Here, in short, you will have the means of laying the foundation of spiritual advancement on the firm basis of true philosophy.

Let me now proceed to give a sketch of the plan of instructions which we shall follow in the School. We propose to explain in a popular style the Theology and Ethics of Brahmo Dharma. These subjects will be taken up on alternate Sundays, so as to form two parallel series of Lectures. It is necessary in my opinion to keep these two subjects always connected with each other, otherwise we may bring about all the evils and dangers of partial and one-sided training. The inculcation of morality without theology is likely to produce a habit of worldly virtues and outward honesty, unaccompanied by a due conception of God's attributes, prayerful reliance upon His Providence and a solemn sense of responsibility

under His eternal moral government. We do not want that godless morality which is so much esteemed in the world, and which consists only in the fulfilment of a few social and domestic duties ; we want that wholesome genuine morality which is grounded in faith, whose standard is the divine will and whose strength is divine help. In order to comprehend and attain this, preliminary theological training is indispensable, which will give the mind proper notions of God and our relations to Him. Nor is theology without morality less mischievous. It makes man rest satisfied with the abstract knowledge of God, or seek pleasure in the mere contemplation of His nature and works. It begets conceited rationalism and exerts no influence on the emotions or the will. It attaches little importance to the fulfilment of duty, and makes religion consist in knowing God, not in serving Him. And hence it is often accompanied by a life of immoral thoughts and practices and vicious indulgences. It is, therefore, necessary that theology and ethics should go hand in hand.

Perhaps you will ask—what is there in Brahmic Theology worth learning? I believe there is a great deal to be learnt if only we apply ourselves to it with hearts free from prejudice and conceit. You are not to expect here any thing like hollow preaching, which only addresses the feelings but affords no solid argument for reflection. Such preaching has certainly its uses elsewhere. But in this institution which is intended to be a School, our object is not to preach but to teach. On referring to the vast mass of our sermons and popular tracts, you may have run away with the idea that there is nothing in Brahmo Dharma which requires thought or study ; it is all superficial and commonplace. However simple Brahmic truths

may appear to be—and they cannot be otherwise as they are the spontaneous convictions of our natural consciousness—there is a world of philosophy at the bottom, which must be explored in order to reach their scientific principles. And, as your object here is to obtain a scientific knowledge of Brahmic theology, it will be necessary to explain all its doctrines in connection with philosophy. We intend to begin with psychology and make it always the basis of our speculation and arguments. With its light we propose to clear up all doubtful points : and to it we shall appeal in solving all difficulties. We shall proceed step by step, drawing legitimate inferences from admitted premises, and from these inferences again developing the conclusion which they warrant, till we succeed in evolving the whole of Brahmic theology. Theology is evidently dependent upon psychology. The arguments and doctrines of religion are derived chiefly from the constitution and laws of the human mind. The more we look into our own consciousness, the more we feel what human nature really is, and recognise those facts of intelligence, personality and moral Government which constitute the foundation of our knowledge of God. It is mind and not matter that furnishes the chief materials of theological knowledge. Hence the study of psychology is essential to theology.

The learned Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University highly extolled the Physical Sciences, Nothing else could be expected from the stand-point from which he viewed the subject. His chief object being the development of the physical resources of the country and the promotion of its material prosperity, he could not but recommend the special cultivation of the physical sciences. But we must remember what Sir William Hamilton says on the

evil influence of an exclusive devotion to physical pursuits. It makes the student a materialist; for, by holding too much communion with material objects and outward nature, he sees nothing but a series of secondary causes and the workings of blind necessity and mechanical laws, and is thus disabled from conceiving the true nature of God. This truth is well exemplified in the case of the numerous professors and students of the physical sciences of our day, who, though they constantly handle the most striking testimonies of God's wisdom and mercy, seem to be thoroughly materialistic in their views. But, if the physical sciences be subordinated and rendered subservient to psychology they prove and illustrate in a remarkable manner the primary truths revealed by the latter. We intend therefore, in our discourses on Brahmic Theology, to attach the utmost importance to psychology, it being at once the foundation and evidence of true theology; and if we have ever occasion to refer to the physical sciences, we shall use them for purposes of illustration. You are not to infer from what I have said that unless you become philosophers you cannot be Brahmos. Far from it. The sweet simplicities of Brahmo Dharma are soul-satisfying, and are capable of meeting all the requirements of faith. But those who desire to understand the foundations of their faith and the reasons of their belief should study psychology. They will come to find that in the highest activity of our intellectual nature reason and faith are one; that what we believe by faith is perfectly constant with the highest philosophy.

In the department of Ethics, we propose to take up only those subjects which relate to practical morality. Speculative Ethics, comprising an analysis of the nature and functions of conscience, the

doctrines of personality and accountability, and the true theory of moral distinctions, will be treated in the course of our Lectures on Theology. In expounding the principles of practical Ethics we shall first describe the true destiny of human life. We shall enumerate and explain the various duties of man—to himself, to society and to God. We shall try to impress upon you the high standard of moral purity which you should ever strive after, and to awaken you to a sense of your imperfections and sins. We shall explain in order the various means whereby the passions may be governed and all the propensities of the flesh subordinate to conscience; and how man may be delivered from corrupt thoughts and evil practices, and how he may steadily advance in the path of purity and rectitude. Gentlemen, I cannot sufficiently urge upon you the importance of *character*. Religion is of very little use if it cannot restrain our passions and enables us to live with conscientious purity, and discharge our various duties with fidelity and earnestness. A tree is known by its fruits, and if we lead corrupt lives we shall certainly be hated as hypocrites and we shall place our religion in a false light before others. You must endeavour to be strict in your moral life, if you wish to glorify God and secure your true welfare here and hereafter. Besides the various fashionable vices of the day which beset Native society, and which have already dragged so many young men into the paths of destruction, demand your utmost care and watchfulness; and unless you habitually guard yourselves against temptation and place your hearts under rigid moral discipline you cannot be saved. Labour “heart within and God overhead,” and pray unceasingly that with His strength you may be able to compass the destiny of existence.

In conclusion, I have only to request you will attend the School regularly, and perseveringly go through the routine of theological and moral exercises which will be prescribed for you. May God bless this institution, and render it conducive to the welfare of the teachers and the pupils !

THE CALCUTTA BRAHMO SCHOOL.

Saturday, 12th May, 1867.

IN entering upon a course of instructions in the Philosophy of Religion, it is necessary, I believe, to say a few words, in the commencement, on the utility of philosophy with special reference to theological and religious pursuits. I have already intimated in my introductory address that the study of psychology is essential to the attainment of a scientific knowledge of the doctrines of religion. Perhaps it is desirable to state the grounds of this assertion more fully before we proceed to discuss those doctrines, and to show how far a knowledge of mind is useful to the theological student and what are the positive advantages which it confers on him. For if you could realize the vast importance of mental philosophy to theological inquiries, you will not only feel intense interest and delight in prosecuting such inquiries with its aid, but be enabled by a right application of it to secure the end you have in view.

There is a sort of confraternity among all the sciences and arts, and some of them throw light upon and afford great help to others, with which they have special and intimate connection. The science of astronomy, for instance, has vastly contributed to the progress of navigation ; the wonder-

ful success of surgery in many of its important branches is owing to the science of optics ; agriculture is indebted to chemistry for many of its modern improvement ; while engineering depends upon the aid it receives from geology and mathematics. Now as some sciences are connected with other sciences, so all sciences acknowledge a common connection with, and dependence upon, mental science. The reason is obvious. The mind is the instrument which we invariably employ in all the sciences, and hence it exercises great influence upon them for good or evil. It may have no relation whatever to the endless variety of objects with which the various sciences are conversant, and which give them their respective names, but it is essentially connected with science itself. Whatever those objects may be, the function of science is simply to discriminate, classify, and arrange them and to deduce general laws and principles ; and as these are intellectual processes the mind is obviously connected with all sciences, and the way in which its faculties are employed must determine the position and character of those sciences. A philosophic acquaintance with the constitution and capabilities of the mind is therefore essential to the proper cultivation of even the physical sciences. We must understand aright the instruments we use in order to wield them successfully. The sailor, it has been justly said, ought to know the length of his line ; so he who seeks to explore and fathom the depths of science, whether it be astronomy or chemistry, optics or geology, ought to know the faculties he employs for the purpose. In the absence of such knowledge he might go beyond his depth ; he might launch into speculations beyond the reach of his capacities, rove misguided amid uncertainties, or ultimately sink into absurd hypo-

theses and false conclusions. History tells us how since the time of Lord Bacon the physical sciences, emancipated from the fetters with which false philosophy had chained them, have careered freely in the path of progressive development. And yet that illustrious philosopher made no direct effort to reform physical science ; all that he did was to reform mental science and place it on a sound logical basis. He directed his attention to the root of the evil, and eradicated all false notions regarding the nature and powers of the human mind, and promulgated true theories of reasoning. He gave to the world a new method of philosophy which by liberating the science of mind indirectly enfranchised and improved the physical sciences. This circumstance illustrates the important influence of knowledge of mind upon general science. The mind is the centre of all sciences, and when this is mastered we may easily extend our conquests in every department of scientific speculation.

The utility of the philosophy of mind is strikingly manifest in those departments of science and art in which we have not only to operate with the mind but also upon the mind. Those who are engaged in politics and education have to deal with and influence the minds of communities and individuals ; and their success must depend in a great measure on their knowledge of the constitution and laws of the mind. It is the duty of every Government to understand the general principles and propensities of human nature, and the special habits and tastes and inclinations of those subject to its sway, that it may be able to frame suitable laws and institutions, and such as are calculated to promote peace and prosperity, harmonize differences, repress crime and encourage *industry and virtue*. Should I on the contrary

adopt arbitrary measures opposed to the nature and interests of the subject people, the force of oppression will issue in a terrible rebound in which oppressed humanity will vindicate and right itself. To the educationist a scientific knowledge of mind is of the greatest importance. It is his vocation and duty to afford such training to his pupils from infancy up as may lead to the harmonious development of all their powers and feelings; and he cannot hope to secure this end unless he has fairly studied the economy and structure of that delicate organism which he undertakes to improve. Any wrong ideas of the constitution of human nature and the laws which govern it will surely prove hurtful and defeat the object he has in view. He may adopt partial and one-sided schemes of education, and thereby effect the abnormal growth of certain faculties to the exclusion of others; or by employing false methods he may foster and strengthen those passions which he ought to help to restrain. In short, whether it be a statesman or educationist or a social reformer, whoever undertakes to promote the political, intellectual or social wellbeing of individuals or communities ought to possess an accurate knowledge of the human mind, as it is essential to their success.

I shall now proceed to show the special importance of the philosophy of mind to theology and ethics: and this I shall consider under two aspects—the one speculative, the other practical; the one objective, the other subjective. The value and importance of mind as an object of speculation through which we obtain a knowledge of the fundamental principles and main arguments of religion cannot be overestimated. To what source are we to refer but to the human mind for our ideas of God, immortality and duty, and where do we seek

for their proofs but in the mind? The material world has no doubt claims upon our gratitude, as to it we owe a large amount of religious instruction and influence. It abounds with exhibitions of the intelligence, power and goodness of its Maker; while its beauty and sublimity ever regale the imagination and lift it heavenward. The starry convex above, the beautiful streams flowing down from majestic mountains and scattering plenty on both sides, the variety of rich and inexhaustible treasures dug from the bowels of the earth, the delicate organism of trees and plants, the still more delicate and wonderful organism of animated beings impart to every healthy soul a volume of knowledge, which cannot fail to confirm faith and promote piety. But it must be confessed that the material world, however salutary its influence may be on a soul already religious, can never of itself indoctrinate us in the truths of religion, which being spiritual are obtainable in the spiritual world within. There is nothing in matter itself, not even all the power and wisdom it manifests, which can lead us to the True God, whose spiritual nature, intelligence, personality and holiness can only be deducted from the facts of our consciousness. So true is this, that those, even, amongst the most learned, who have studied the economy of the material world apart from the revelations of the mind, have landed in materialism, and if they have formed any theology it is a theology made up of necessity and nature, law and blind force,—unmoral and unspiritual, soulless and godless. Those who look within and study the constitution of the mind cannot fail to find in it positive arguments which necessitate belief in true Theism. Our consciousness at once reveals to us free intelligence and moral liberty as the essential characteristics of the human mind, which

distinguish it from matter, raised it above the brute necessity which governs the material world, and constitute the fundamental arguments for a Deity. To deny these essential attributes of humanity would be to ignore the basis of theology and ethics. Were we to identify mind with matter and regard intelligence as a mere physical phenomenon, we must necessarily deny the spirituality and independence of God ; and if we ignore our own moral nature we would be constrained to deny God's holiness and His position as Moral Governor of the universe. From such fatal errors and mistakes psychology alone can save us. It upholds theology and ethics and vindicates God. It leads us into our own minds and presents to us on the indisputable testimony of consciousness those primary ideas and arguments of intelligence, morality, free will and infinity on which theology as a science is based. With its aid also we are enabled to combat successfully all false theories and notions in reference to theology and ethics, and to discomfit scepticism and materialism on the one hand and superstition on the other. If it be true that "ignorance of self is ignorance of God," the philosophy of mind by removing the former enables us to know God.

The highest utility of mental philosophy yet remains to be mentioned. This consists in the exercise and discipline which it affords to the mind. In the whole range of literature and science there is nothing, I believe, which is so efficacious in this respect as psychology. You may talk of the inestimable advantages of history and mathematics and physical science ; undoubtedly each is useful in its own way ; but as a gymnastic of the mind none could bear comparison with mental philosophy. The various arts and sciences differ from each other in the quantitative value of the knowledge

they respectively impart : some offer a large complement of positive truths than others, and on that ground claim superiority over the latter. In regard to the quality of knowledge also there is disparity among them. Certain sciences are said to give better, that is, more useful knowledge than others, and are therefore esteemed more valuable. This relative value again is, like the price of commodities in the market of the world, subject to fluctuations under the law of demand and supply. Engineering is reckoned a more useful thing by the Natives of India than navigation which is hardly appreciated and is not in demand ; while law and medicine rise in value according to the prevalence of litigation and disease. Thus in regard to quantity and quality of knowledge men attach different degrees of superiority and inferiority to the various arts and sciences. Nay it is also a disputed question among men whether he is wiser and worthy of great respect who possesses a larger amount of information or he who has acquired some branch of useful knowledge. The astronomer who nightly watches the movements of the heavenly bodies, and during the day reduces his observations to science and law, and adds continually to his stock of knowledge by study and observation, glories and rejoices in the transcendent dignity and value of his pursuits and believes there is nothing like astronomy. The engineer on the other hand prides himself on the utility of his occupation as he looks with complacency upon the splendid works constructed by him, houses, bridges, and rail-roads, ridicules the aerial speculations of the astronomer, and flatters himself as the most useful member of society, and extols the art of engineering as the most valuable branch of knowledge, which furnishes the chief means of utilizing the resources of a country and thereby advancing

its material prosperity. On careful consideration it will, however, appear that the value which each of them attaches to his own pursuit is indeed an inferior kind of utility ; and that true utility rests on far higher grounds. What then is the true criterion of utility ? To solve this important question it is necessary to understand the destiny of man's life. For utility is to be understood in a relative sense ; a thing is useful in relation to certain object to be attained. Hence that science is pre-eminently useful which helps us to accomplish the highest object of existence. If we disregard the various subordinate parts which men have to play in the theatre of social existence, and consider the mission of man as man, we cannot but conclude that the paramount end of his existence is the perfection of his nature,—the normal development of all his faculties and feelings, of his entire spiritual constitution. There are amongst men an endless variety of professions and countless differences in their outward modes of living ; but as beneath all these differences there is identity of human nature, so beneath the variety of professions there is unity of human destiny. To draw an analogy from the vegetable creation : There are innumerable species of trees and plants in different parts of the world which vary in form, size, and solidity, and yield different kinds of fruits and flowers. But they all belong to the same genus, and have this destiny in common,—they must *grow* ; each is destined to develop itself. So all men, however dissimilar in position, nationality or race, are destined by God to seek the development of their whole being, and the perfection of their nature. This being the ultimate end of man's life, it is evident that knowledge is useful only so far as it contributes to this end. Herein lies the only true criterion of

utility. Astronomy and chemistry, navigation and engineering, medicine and law are all useful in their own way, but their utility is special, not absolute, having reference to special relations and requirements of society. They are called useful because they qualify man to become an instrument of doing some good to others. In proportion to the aptitude and efficiency which a particular branch of knowledge affords to man for the accomplishment of certain schemes of social comfort would be its utility. Such an estimate of the value of knowledge rests obviously as a misapprehension of man's true mission, and would be warrantable only on the supposition that he is merely an instrument for the accomplishment of some object external to himself, and has nothing to do with his own improvement. I admit—and who will not admit?—that engineering is highly useful as it subserves some of the most important purposes of society; but what are the advantages which it confers upon the engineer himself? Of what use is a knowledge of engineering to him as a man? It makes him an instrument for the benefit of others, but does it help him to improve his own faculties? If not, however great may be its value in its relations to society and upon worldly considerations, it lacks absolute utility. That science is truly useful which conduces to the development of the mind. Neither the mere knowledge of astronomy nor the practice of engineering is entitled to be called useful in the higher sense of the term, for while the latter transforms man into a machine or instrument which like the steam engine ever does good to others but attends not to its own improvement; the former by supplying only a large quantity of theoretic knowledge converts man into a mere library or magazine of information.

Neither in the number of truths learnt nor in the value of the external advantages secured, does the true utility of a science consist, but in the exercise and discipline with which it develops and perfects the mind itself. This point demands your careful consideration, as I know very erroneous opinions prevail among Native students on this important subject, opinions which in my opinion, seriously interfere with the successful prosecution of scientific studies, and with true mental culture. What you should aim at, Gentlemen, as the legitimate object of your intellectual pursuits is the cultivation of the mental powers, and whatever knowledge you attain should be rendered subservient to that end. What if education enables you to obtain lucrative posts under Government, or ply some independent and profitable trade? You may obtain riches and distinction, but would you regard these advantages as a sufficient recompense for your labours? I hope you are theoretically at least above the vulgar error which values education by the money it brings. But many of you, I fear, would boastfully point to your extensive stock of literary and scientific information as the proud trophy of your intellectual conquests? You are the more inclined to do so as you find such qualification to be a passport to university honour; but remember, Gentlemen, "cramming" never constituted the true honour or merit of a student. All that a student should seek is mental improvement by means of vigorous exercise; but cramming affords little or no exercise, except perhaps to the memory which it loads with a mass of facts and figures. The vocation of a scholar, like the mission of man I have already described, is the development of the mind. Behold the harmony between the intellectual and moral destiny of man! This the teachers and students of our colleges and

schools would do well to remember and act upon. For the more our students receive sound education, the more will they be enabled to grow into true manhood and to compass the high purpose of human life here and hereafter. The human mind needs exercise, varied and sustained exercise, such as shall effect its continued development towards perfection. Every faculty must be roused to activity, all the energies must be harmoniously developed. This would, however, be impossible if the mind were treated as a mere receptacle of knowledge and crammed with other men's ideas and facts from books : for in that case there would be no active exercise of the mind ; if there be any it would be a sort of passive activity, if I may be allowed to use the expression. Unless the mind be duly and continually exercised there can be no healthy growth, no real progress. In regard to our physical as well as mental constitution active exercise is essential to health and strength and development. The human body is so constituted that unless due exercise be given to each limb and muscle, it will be a prey to debility and disease, and perhaps paralysis, and the best food may give it temporary gratification by relieving immediate wants but cannot give health or strength. Such is also the constitution of the human mind. A fund of important and useful truths may afford a morbid satisfaction by gratifying mere curiosity, but is of little use in effecting the healthy development of the mind unless each faculty receives due exercise and discipline.

These considerations bring us to the main point of discussion, whether mental activity has any value in itself, or whether it is simply a means to the attainment of truth. To superficial observers the latter view would no doubt appear to be the correct one. It is popularly believed that the actual

possession of truth is more valuable than the mere pursuit of it. Such, however, is not actually the case; and the authority of a host of eminent metaphysicians supports the contrary position that the pursuit itself is of greater value than the truth pursued, or in other words that mental exercise is more important than the knowledge it enables us to attain. Intellectual pursuits have been aptly compared to a chase in which the hunting has greater interest than the game itself. When a truth which we were pursuing is once possessed it loses its value and interest, unless it be in its turn a stimulus to fresh activity and exertions. Who would wish the indolent enjoyment of a few truths? Life would be a burden if men were doomed to a state of mental repose and inaction after the attainment of a limited stock of knowledge. "To live is to energize." We desire and pursue knowledge not so much for its sake as for the new sphere of activity into which it will introduce us, and the new hopes and aspirations it will enkindle in us. We seek truth not with a view to rest in it, but that it may stimulate fresh activity and fresh hope. No amount of knowledge or happiness can satisfy the mind; what is already attained compels us to seek more; and even after extensive conquests have been achieved we would weep Alexander-like if there be not more to win. Man is made for activity and if he is born to enjoy happiness too, that happiness is the happiness of a life activity and hope, not the gratification of sleep, not the final happiness of intellectual or religious beatitude. The truth is, we are destined to pass through progressive stages of knowledge and happiness in the path to perfection, and each stage we attain is valuable only as the starting point of fresh enterprise and activity.

It will be admitted then that the destiny of man being the progressive development of the mind through constant exercise, the utility of knowledge must be measured according to its capacity to contribute to that end. Those sciences and studies which afford greater and more improving exercise to the faculties of the mind possess a higher utility than those which impart greater amount of knowledge or do greater good to society. It follows then that mental science claims the first place in the scale of utility, as nothing conduces so effectually to mental exercise as the deep and careful study of the facts of the mind itself. Experience teaches us that the mind then enjoys the most vigorous and independent exercise when we abstract ourselves from the external world, and turn the eye inward upon the mind itself, and try to understand its various phenomena. Several interesting and important problems present themselves to us, in our efforts to solve them our highest and best faculties are brought into exercise ; we think and reason, analyze and compare, and deduce general laws and principles ; we scrutinize each fact of our consciousness ; and we conduct repeated and independent experiments. the entire apparatus being always within us, in order to test the accuracy of our conclusions and the soundness of the various theories propounded by others. Thus we pass through the highest and most vigorous intellectual exercises until we arrive at truth. And even we fail now and then to reach any definite conclusions, the very exercise itself is valuable and repays our utmost toil, inasmuch as it strengthens and disciplines the mind in the most effectual manner. Such independent, sustained and varied exercise serves to rouse all the mental faculties and keep them in a state of healthy activity and elasticity. Each being duly trained

and disciplined for its work, all the faculties are marshalled in order and always kept ready for the most difficult scientific achievements. Thus the whole mind is harmoniously developed under the best system of intellectual discipline.

But the discipline which the mind attains through exercise in the gymnasium of mental philosophy is not exclusively of an intellectual character ; it has also a moral and religious influence. The study of mind enables us to reform it. I am prepared to testify to the truth of this from my own experience. When through the grace of God the light of religion first dawned on my mind, and enabled me to see my sins and bestirred me to seek deliverance from them, I derived much aid from metaphysics in my early struggles. I felt little or no interest in the science before, and always regarded it as a dry and unprofitable study. But it since assumed an altogether new and interesting aspect in connection with my religious life. Philosophy first taught me insight and reflection, and turned my eye inward from the things of the external world, amidst which alone it hitherto loved to roam. I began to think of myself, and reflect on my position, character and destiny. A spirit of seriousness came over me accompanied by a habit of reflection, and I felt a distaste for light literature, idle amusements and trivial worldly occupations. Levity gave way to earnestness. Nothing pleased me so much or appeared so valuable as earnest and deep thought. The mental powers attained a degree of tensility and firmness, and repressed those irregular thoughts and desires which their former lax state had naturally fostered. The rigid discipline through which the mind passed served as a safeguard against any disorder or insubordination of the lower propensities, against their secret conspiracy

and open revolt. The more I reflected on my nature the more I discovered my secret sins ; and in my struggles with these sins I felt the strength of mental discipline. In self-knowledge I found the secret of self-government. The study of mental science taught me that my mind was really *my* mind. Formerly the passions of the mind seemed to be above all restraint and control, now it appeared possible to bring them under the domination of the moral law through a course of severe and systematic discipline. In relating my own experiences I do not mean to exaggerate the moral influence of mental philosophy. I do not believe that it can enable us to wholly sanctify the heart and purify the soul. No, it is not given to man to save himself from sin ; only Divine grace working through our prayers can effect that object. All that I urge on your consideration, on the testimony of my personal experience, is that the scientific study of mind imposes great restraint on the propensities and impulses of our lower nature by bringing them under a system of discipline, while the habits of earnestness and deep thought which it promotes materially help us in overcoming temptations and dispose our hearts for the serious contemplations and pursuits of the higher life.

I have thus briefly explained the several advantages of mental philosophy. I have pointed out its relative utility, first in its bearings on science in general, in which the mind is used as the instrument of operation ; secondly in reference to those sciences in which the mind is the subject of operation. I have demonstrated its objective value as the means of attaining the truths of theology and ethics. Lastly, I have considered its objective utility as the best means of affording intellectual and moral exercise to the mind. This last is, as

I have said, the highest utility of psychology and the best recommendation for its study; and in order to appreciate it properly and take due practical advantage of it, it is necessary, that you should understand the high destiny of your life. The more you do this the more you will feel the sublimity and utility of mental philosophy, the greater will be your practical interest in it and your success in using it for your intellectual and moral improvement, and the reformation of your entire spiritual nature. Whether you pursue secular studies in your respective colleges or listen to theological lectures in the Brahmo School, your first duty as students is to seize upon the true object of your life, to wit, the progressive development of your mind towards perfection by means of exercise and discipline. I must especially insist on your keeping this object in view in connection with this institution. In applying yourselves to the philosophy of theology and ethics, you should never think of merely collecting information or carrying home a load of doctrines and truths. Give your minds independent and vigorous action, and with God's help you will be enabled to advance steadily in the path of moral and religious progress.

· FAITH ·

22nd March, 1868.

THE subject of my sermon this evening is Faith, but before I proceed to give a discourse upon it, I must tell you it gives me sincere and unbounded joy to be permitted, through God's grace, to address you—address you not merely as my countrymen, but as fellow-believers in the same God, as co-workers in the same great and noble cause. I am glad that you have succeeded in establishing this Prarthana Somaj, and that I am thus enabled to talk to you as fellow-theists. You have established this temple for the worship of the one true God, and rightly you call it Prarthana Somaj—prayer association. You assembled here week after week for the purpose of offering the prayers of your heart unto the true God,—not to any idol, but to the supreme Ruler of the universe the moral-Governor of us all, the supreme Father of all the families of this world. It strikes me, therefore, that the first subject which ought to engage your attention is faith. You ought to know on what ground to stand—to stand firmly and steadfastly,—before you offer up your prayers. If you hope that your prayers will be received on high, if you hope that

[A Sermon preached by the Minister, at the PRARTHANA SOMAJ, Bombay, on 22nd March 1868. Reprinted from the *Bombay Gazette*.]

your prayers will be accepted by him to whom you offer them, you must be sure that you have deep faith in him. Prayer without faith is but a mockery, and can never bear fruit. You must have deep faith in the true God before any word you say can be accepted by Him. Without faith prayers are but words, and, therefore, must prove unacceptable and fruitless. In fact, faith is the beginning of religion—the basis of religious life—the point of departure from worldly life to the gate through which we enter into God's kingdom. Before a man has got true faith he lives in this world—tries merely to obtain money, fame, bodily comforts : as soon as he has faith we see a conversion—not a partial but a thorough conversion of the heart. His life is altogether changed ; the mainsprings of his life are altogether changed ; his motives, his doctrines, his outward pursuits—all show a wonderful and radical change. Now my friends, brethren of the Prarthana Somaj, my first request to you is, have faith in that God in whom you have learned to believe. For it is my conviction that knowledge is one thing and faith is quite a different thing. I admit that you all know that God is one, that God can never be identified with the idols worshipped in this country or in any other country, that the Creator is not the same as created objects. But you must not rest satisfied with this knowledge. To know that God is one, and to have deep faith in that God, are two essentially different things. In regard to the true God this difference is especially remarkable. Now, to unbelievers God is simply a shadow, a thing that cannot be seen. There are some in this world who know that there is a God but cannot approach Him, cannot offer their prayers to Him—think it perfectly absurd to attempt to draw near to Him. There is very little difference

between the air we breathe and the God of the Universe, in the estimation of such men. Their hearts are in the world, their lips may offer praise unto God—their intellect may believe that God is,—but their hearts, their souls, their lives, are sunk in the mire of the world. If they want joy they will go to the world ; God gives them no delight. If they want a place to stand upon, it is the world—its fame, its wealth, its pleasures. They may be called virtuous, but I see no trace of faith in them. My friends, you ought not to rest satisfied with an intellectual acquiescence in the existence of the Deity ; you must progress—you must advance a step further. Take that step—enter upon the stage of faith—believe with your heart, your whole soul, your entire life, that the God of the Universe is one. * * * * * Not for one moment is God remote from us—He dwells within us, and we in Him. Not a breath can we draw without Him—our vitality is from Him and in Him ; why then, should I search for my God in any distant temple ? Is not man's body the living temple in which God dwells ? Yes ; He is within us, and He is ever near to us. Then, let me feel it. Ask the student—ask the scholar—ask the man versed in all the theology of the world,—is his intellect enough to lead him to God ? No ; all his Shasters, all his academic divinity will fail ; these cannot make him realise his God. His God is no God to him,—his eyes see Him not. He closes his eyes and tries to realise his God within him,—it is as dark within as without ! Man's knowledge is nothing,—the mere knowledge of God is nothing, if I cannot feel Him within the inmost recesses of my heart, as a father, as a mother, as a friend,—my guide, my companion,—one in whom I live, and, therefore, one whom I must

love. Such a God is the true God, and yet knowledge cannot make man draw near to that God. I have recourse to my books. I go to my teachers and my ministers. I enter into temples, or churches, or cathedrals, or musjeeds,—but I see not my God, I feel not my God,—my heart is vacant,—outside and inside, it is all emptiness, all shadow, all blank,—there is no living God ! I see my brethren around me ; I see all the fowls of the air and the beasts of the wilderness ; *they* live, it is true. I see all material objects : they are real to me. But what is it which, in spite of all my knowledge, prevents me from realising my God in the same way as I realise the material objects—the living beings—of this world ? The heart says, there is no faith. Ah, my friends, here observe the distinction between knowledge and faith. When you see this light, can you deny the existence of the light ? To know that the light is, is to see the light before you ; but in regard to God the case is different. I tell you my God is here ; the Omnipresent Deity, the Supreme Deity of the universe, is in this very congregation ; but it is impossible to realise His existence and His presence without faith, which is truly the evidence of things not seen—in fact, is the only evidence which you can have of the existence of God. The man of faith carries with him the presence of his Deity wherever he goes ; in the temple, in the place of business, in mercantile houses, in banking establishment God is with him. This presence he can never put by. Such a presence is the real presence of God, and if you can believe God in this way, then, but not till then, shall I acknowledge that you have faith in the God of the Prarthana Somaj. You may offer up your prayers day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year ; but without that faith it is all loss of words, waste of

strength, waste of energy, waste of intelligence. Where do your prayers go to? From an empty heart these words emanate,—into empty space these words vanish. But if you have the real God before you, just as the idolator has a real idol before him, one word is enough—one simple or rude word though it be. Unlettered, ignorant you may be, but one little word, one rude word, coming from the heart and addressed to the living God, revolutionises the whole life—converts the whole soul—makes man divine! This is the sort of faith we must have in the living God. The second article of our faith is immortality of the soul. After faith comes hope. Why should I have faith in God? Is this world a be-all and end-all of my existence? If so, I may know, I may believe, I may have faith that God is, but what is God to me? why should I say He is worth living for? Ah, my brethren, for the sake of immortality, for the sake of eternal life;—not for the forty days or months of this life, but for eternal life. Eternity is worth living for, eternal blessedness is worth seeking. And it is here the difference between knowledge and faith is to be found. You will tell me—"We all know that the soul does not die at the time of death, but survives it." You tell me—"We know that there is a future state of rewards and punishments." As Brahmos you may do so, as theists you may acknowledge with your intellect that there is a future state of rewards and punishments; but the question is, not as regards knowledge, but as regards faith. Have you faith in the next world? * * * * The man of faith *sees* that there is a next world. He does not merely *know*, but has such an amount of real vivid perception that he *sees* through the gateway of death, the mansions of bliss prepared for the righteous;—he *sees* also that there is adequate punish-

ment reserved for the ungodly—and the man shrinks from that punishment. It is not an imaginary punishment, which may or may not come ; it is not the decision of a logical mind ; it is not the result of some argumentative process.—but is a *certain* thing : a punishment as certain, a reward as certain, as possibly can be. The man is certain of punishment if he were to commit sin, certain of reward if he were to live in a godly way. With such prospective certainties before him, what can he do ? His heart does not waver ;—he lives in faith, his hope is great and all things around him here are as shadows. With the next world before me, this present world seems shadowy ;—all its glittering and gold, all its acquaintances and friends, are but for a day, but for an hour, but for a moment perhaps,—but that great world I see before me is real, far more real than any thing that this world presents to my view. If, then, I am wise, not silly and foolish,—if I have eyes and am not blind, why should I leave that certain, that real world, which consists of abiding mansions of joy, for the sake of a few thousand rupees, with sin, with iniquity, and, therefore, with necessary and inevitable punishment in the life to come ? Better that I should pursue that reality, that certainty, than that I should be enchained like a prisoner and a captive amidst the fascinations and the corruptions of this world !—That is the nature of the man of faith in regard to immortality. Now, both these doctrines you are aware of, and my prayer to you is, to convert these doctrines into the facts of life—facts of the heart and of the soul. The third and last article of faith I shall dwell upon is conscience and moral truth. In regard to this also we see a difference between knowledge and faith. Now I dare say almost all of you have received an English education, and are enlightened enough to

know that there is much that is superstitious and wrong around you. You have consciences that tell you, this is wrong and that is right your enlightened minds see what is right and distinguish it from that which is wrong. But now, tell me, do you always do that which is right; do you always consistently abjure that which is false? When you know a thing to be false or wrong, do you at once recoil back from it and say "My hands shall not touch that contaminating thing?" Or do you still sport with it and enjoy it? When you know a thing to be right do you at once step forward, unmindful of all consequences, decide that that which is right must be done—done without any delay, unwaveringly, enthusiastically, and nobly? Do you always do that?—is my question. I give you credit for your consciences, your knowledge, your education, your profound scholarship; I know you all admit this is right and that is wrong; but where is the incentive to the performance of that which is right? When the time for action comes, ah, then conscience proves a deception. Where is your conscience then? You take into your hand the arithmetic of this world and weigh the consequences of action, compute loss and gain, and then say, here is so much advantage and there so much disadvantage; if the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, choose that which is right; but if the evils, the agonies, the distresses outweigh the advantages, shun it as wise and prudent men! Trouble not your heads with this or that act of rectitude, virtue, or holiness, if these things are sure to lead you into a life of disadvantage, of privation, and distress!—That shows what a difference there is between the knowledge of right, and faith in that which is right, the intellectual perception of truth, and faith in truth. Do you think I would believe that you are

men of faith—do you think I would believe that you have real faith in truth—if in your actions in this world I miss holiness, rectitude, conscientiousness, purity? What is conscience but a mockery—a grandmother's tale—if it cannot avail in the season of trial! Is it a thing to amuse you?—is it a thing you may read over, or sleep over, as the case may be?—is it simply to satisfy your intellectual curiosity?—are the dictates of conscience merely destined to aid you in believing that which is right and distinguishing it from that which is wrong? That is not the object of conscience, that is not the object for which God has endowed us with this moral faculty. What are all these disadvantages which appear so important in the eyes of the worldly-minded man,—what are these, I say, compared with the great gain which I am sure to possess if I lead a conscientious life? One spot that blackens my heart—one impurity that contaminates my soul—is death to me. And shall I prefer living death to a life of conscience, a life of purity? Shall I take all those advantages of the world—fifty crores of rupees, estates beyond number and value—and at the same time put impurity into my heart, convert life into death? What is this world to me? What are all these contaminations of the world, its kingdoms and empires to me? Purity of heart is all in all; for that I shall live, and that shall be my solace on my death-bed. When friends and kinsmen shall bid their last farewell to me, when I shall cast my last fond glance at my family in departing from this world, then—if I have not had that purity of heart—shall my arithmetic of prudence be tested in the crucible of actual facts,—then shall I find how all this light of phantasmagoria passes away from me; and when my eyes are turned within to see sin in all its naked deformity I shall behold

something which not all the billows of the Ocean can wash away : impurity seated in the depths of my heart. My body is going away, and my ears no longer hear what a father or a mother has to say, but I hear one thing : the groanings of a heart full of vice and sin. My eyes are fading away, I see not the mournful faces of my relatives, but one thing I do see : I see the horrid deformity of my soul, the accumulated iniquities of a life of voluptuous indulgence. Oh, God ! is it for this that I have lived in this world ? And am I to bid farewell to it with sins such as, these upon me,—bearing this unbearable load of iniquities into that world to which Thou dost call me ?—That would be the language of a sinner on his dead-bed. Therefore, in due time, my friends, you ought to look into these deceptive arguments which lead men away from honesty and conscientiousness, into prudence—into what the world calls deliberation, wisdom, but which is no other than folly. [After dwelling on the importance of a perfect observance of truth at all risks, and remarking that it was faith which enabled a man to resist temptations to falsehood the speaker proceeded to say—] There is no wavering with the man of faith. But the worldly-minded man consults his books, speaks to his broker, goes into the Bank of Bombay : and he asks,—shall I be a loser or a gainer ? He wants to assure himself that his virtue is always paying. Oh, what a great delusion ! Situated as we are, we have oftentimes to purchase righteousness with the blood which courses through our veins and arteries. Many a martyr has testified to the truth of this. Many a reformer has voluntarily given his life-blood simply that God's name might be magnified and glorified upon earth. That is fidelity to truth. But if your truth shines only in the school, in

the college, or in your houses, and as soon as the trial comes, fails. that is not truth—I call it a shadow, I call it the most unreal of all unreal things—the most shadowy of all shadowy things in this world. It is something certainly, but where is that thing when you come to stretch out your hands to seize it? In the time of trial you grope in the dark to find it and there is no truth for you. It has all vanished, it does not exist for you, and yet you say, “Oh, what a pleasant thing is my religion, it gives me virtue and gold together, all at the same time!” This man, with his bags of gold, his theology, his prayer meetings, his churches, his profound scholarship, he prides himself upon these, and he says, “Oh, what a pure religion I have got! These other men are fanatics;—they call themselves men of faith, and they get religion but lose the word. I, a man of prudence, get religion and the world too—God and Mammon both at the same time,—while these misguided foolish fellows, they may have something like religion, but they have no true religion, because they have forfeited the world.” Now, true wisdom would show who is really mistaken. If I have truth I must live and die for truth, and the death-bed will satisfy me as to my sincerity. Therefore, while life is in you, do not sport with truth, do not believe that conscience is simply for times of peace but rather that it is really and specially for times of trouble and trial. God has given us conscience, not that we may hear it simply in times of comfort, just as we hear our schoolmasters give us lessons in grammar, history, or mathematics,—but that it should be a guide to us, to lead us away from the carnal enjoyments and corruptions of this world; and if it be such a guide we must place our entire confidence in it. If God speaks to us through our conscience, let us follow Him with our whole heart, and do not let us

follow the misguided men of this world. Away then, all the logic of the world, all your prudence, all your deliberation, all your God-*plus*-Mammon policy! Come, if need be, all the sufferings of the world.—diseases for the body, anguish for the heart, corroding cares for the mind : as a willing servant of my Great Master shall I accept all those dispensations of Providence, if it be necessary to undergo them in order to prove faithful to Him that speaks to me. I have dilated upon the three fundamental articles of our belief. Whoever has faith in God begins to think of some hereafter. Then his heart distends with hopes. He does not calculate according to the arithmetic of the world ;—he looks beyond—to that eternity where there is punishment for the vicious and reward for the virtuous. Faith on the one side and hope on the other, lead a man continually in the paths of righteousness, conscientiousness, and purity. God must be followed, because He is my Master. Eternity must be regarded, because that is my real home. Not this building—not this Bombay—not this India—not the beautiful places that are like paradise on earth. My residence is not there. My permanent residence is where there is no death, where there is no sorrow, if I am righteous here. If such be the case I cannot but lead a life of holiness and purity. Evil becomes impossible. A man's hands are tied by God, tied in order that they may never commit that which is evil. He finds his way straight, there is no wavering. Different is the future of those who may call themselves theists, believers in God, but who have no faith in God, no faith in the next world, no faith in truth. Outwardly they are the same, but inwardly there is a great difference. Their unconverted hearts follow the ways of the world, though their enlightened cry be still, God is ! and the soul is immortal ! Friends, I

warn you against following the example of these worldly-minded men. You have just begun a great work in which you shall have to persevere anxiously : make faith the firm and permanent ground on which you shall stand. Do not waver, for without faith there is no salvation. Knowledge never saves a man. Deep erudition never does and never shall save a man. Books can never prove saviours. Your intellect, heavy laden with all the treasures of this world's wisdom, will never be able to lighten you into the paths of salvation. But the rude, untutored, savage heart of the poor man, if filled with sincere and deep trust in God, is a real guide to salvation. Such a heart will bring salvation ; for it is not man that saves man, but God that saves all men. Here all diversities disappear from religion : There is belief in God, there is belief in the immortality of the soul, belief in conscience.—but no such belief can of itself save man. Only that saves which has for its fundamental principle that man is saved, not by deeds, not by knowledge of the law, but by faith and faith alone. If you have that pure faith in the living God, then all the waves of the sea may come upon you, and yet like a rock in the midst of the billows you will stand firm and immoveable. [The speaker went on to say that human exertions could not save a man, and that humble prayer to God was necessary, and he then continued—] If there is perfect humility within you, the heavenly Father comes to your rescue—I was going to say, runs to your rescue. If His poor, sinful children in this Prarthana Somaj are groaning and crying, and offering up their prayers to Him, the living God who is present in this congregation, will wipe away their sins, remove all their distresses, take away all their hardships, and give them a resting place for time and eternity. Then they will

find that what they could not do for themselves, God does in a moment. Faith does miracles from which intelligence recoil. * * * * Friends, you have taken the name of theists. Remember, then, that a theistical profession brings with it immense responsibilities. We must live and die for truth, for God, for immortality. If these things that I have told you are facts, believe me, friends, the only consolation, the only reward I look for, is that you may live and die as theists—as believers, real, sincere, earnest believers in God. I do not preach dogmas or doctrines. These are simple truths which you yourselves acknowledge. I have only tried to show you that knowledge of these truths will not save you. Therefore, have faith in these truths: convert things that you know into things that you feel. Then I say, you shall live in God. You shall see to the right and to the left, you shall look before and behind, and find yourself encompassed by the living presence of God. He is with me in times of prosperity and in times of adversity; He is with me in life and He shall be with me in death. This is my faith, and may God bless us all and give us that faith which alone can bring salvation.

PRAYER.

—o—
26th March, 1868.

HAVING explained the doctrine of Faith, I have to present before you this evening our doctrine of Prayer. It appears to me that, in the natural order of man's spiritual progress, Prayer follows, and in fact is inseparable from Faith. The first step that a man takes in religious progress is faith in God. The next step he takes is prayer or worship of God. To acknowledge God through faith and belief is certainly inseparable from the worship of that God. The very relation in which we stand to God makes it absolutely necessary and imperative that we should offer our homage to Him. What is the relation in which we stand to God? What is the knowledge we have of God and of our relation to Him? He stands before us, as the Supreme Ruler of the universe—the infinite moral Governor of all mankind. This very relation naturally and spontaneously excites our homage. Such a relation demands that we should give to God the tribute of our adoration and homage. So in regard to earthly sovereigns. As soon as we admit a certain power upon earth to be our ruling power, so soon both the body and the mind readily unite to make an exhibition of loyalty to such a ruling power.

[A Sermon preached by the Minister. at the PRARTHANA SOMAJ, Bombay, on 26th March, 1868. Reprinted from the *Bombay Gazette* with some alterations and additions.]

If God, then, be the Supreme ruling power—the highest moral Governor of the universe,—the body, the mind, and the soul must naturally and instinctively bow down in order to do honour and pay homage to such a Governor. Homage is a duty, the very first duty which we owe to God as the Ruler of the universe. We cannot do without it,—we cannot dispense with it,—unless we destroy the very relation in which we stand to God. Worship, then, is natural, and history proves it to be natural. Wherever men have acknowledged God as the Creator and the Ruler of the universe, there invariably we find some kind of worship enjoined and followed as a regular ceremony—as a daily duty. That worship may be mixed up with idolatry—there may be much that is condemnable in such worship—but still worship there must be where there is recognition of God, as homage there must be where there is recognition of an earthly sovereign. Worship—corresponding to the Sanskrit word *Upasana*—is the more comprehensive word, which involves several elements of which prayer (*Prarthana*) is only one; but the word ‘prayer’ has been used both in the comprehensive sense of worship, and also in the particular exclusive sense of spiritual begging. I have taken it first in the comprehensive sense, namely, worship. Every believer in God is bound to worship God; and history tells us that every believer in God has worshipped God in some form or other. But there are some who rest satisfied with this general worship of God,—at least to it they have no objection to offer; but as regards prayer in its narrow and stricter sense they have objection to it. They would not have recourse to it,—they would even go the length of declaring it to be unreasonable, absurd, and even, injurious.

Worship comprises three elements—adoration, gratitude, and prayer. By adoration we mean simply ascribing glory and doing homage to God's holiness. The more we are impressed with His righteousness and purity the more we adore Him. So His infinite mercy naturally awakens in us sentiments of gratitude and leads us to offer thanksgivings for the numerous blessings He vouchsafes unto us. You will no doubt admit that so far as God is great and holy, we must acknowledge His greatness and adore His holiness ; and that so far as He is kind and merciful, and plenteous in loving kindness, so far must we acknowledge all the benefits, advantages, and pleasures He has conferred upon us, and does daily confer upon us, with most fervent and sincere gratitude. But the subject upon which I am about to enter is one which seems to admit of, as it has often given rise to, discussions, doubts, and objections. To my mind, however, superior to these two elements of worship, is the third element—namely, prayer. The first two are *duties*—adoration and gratitude.—but the last is a *necessity*. Without it I cannot live—without it I cannot grow in spiritual life—without it all my hopes of spiritual progress would be in a moment blasted—without it life and death would be to me identical. It is my duty to magnify God, and my duty to offer my gratitude to God, but it is indispensably necessary for my spiritual life that I should prostrate and humble myself down to the dust, and beg and beseech my God to give me that aid which is essential to the success of all my spiritual endeavours—which is essential to the attainment to salvation here and hereafter. It is this great point which it is my desire to impress upon you this evening.

The experience of all mankind ever since man

was born, down to the present time, has testified that unaided human power is not enough to overcome evil, to guard the soul against sin. We feel this daily—in our hourly struggles with the temptations of the world we feel this. It is not a matter which can be argued out by any appeal to the authority of books or to the deductions of logic. No: I would appeal to your experiences, and ask you, whether you have spiritual nerve enough within you to guard yourselves against every sin,—not one sin or two sins, not five varieties of sin—but every manner and kind of sin. Your natural temperament and the peculiar advantages of your social position or education or age may put you beyond particular temptations: you may be above theft and murder and other similar crimes; but have you conquered all the passions and lusts of the flesh, are you liable to no sin whatever? I say there is not a man of flesh and blood that breathes on earth who can triumphantly say, “Here am I; come all manner of sin and temptation and my heart is proof against all attacks.” The fact is, God’s aid is absolutely necessary—the eyes must be lifted up, and we must invoke the blessings of that Divine Father without whose aid man cannot advance one single step in the path of religious progress.

Ask the rude rustic why he prays every day of his life. He would be at a loss to determine what to say in reply. All that such an untutored man would say would be this—I know not why I pray, but this I can say, I cannot do without prayer; every day there are so many sins threatening to devour me that only for the purpose of self-defence, only to save my soul, I must humble myself down and offer my prayer to God. If the rude rustic has no other explanation of prayer, neither has the wise man. I can give you no better explanation of the fact how

I have learned to pray and why I am in the habit of offering prayer daily to my God. If I could do without it, this very moment I would leave off the habit. If I had never felt the necessity of prayer myself, I would never have been engaged in it, even if it were insisted upon by teachers or books ;—but I have found it necessary. When it pleased my merciful God to cause the light of religion to dawn upon my heart,—allow me to mention an incident from the earliest chapter of my religious history—when through His grace my eyes were first opened to the importance of religion, and the first struggles for emancipation from sin began to agitate my heart, then I felt the need of prayer. I found my heart was full of darkness, and was under the deadly influence of all the passions of the flesh, the allurements of the world, the power of evil, the power of fame, and of lust, and of ambition, and of covetousness, and of worldliness. Against these multitudinous enemies I, a poor sinner, could not possibly stand. Feeble in body, feebler in mind, feebler still in spirit, how could I stand in the face of enemies so awful, so formidable, and so numerous as these, enemies outside and enemies within, contending for mastery over my soul day and night ? What could I do in circumstances such as these ? I waited not for the revelation of any particular book or the teaching of any particular prophet. In deep agony I consulted my soul, and my soul said, in language exceedingly simple and impressive—“ Pray, and pray, if you want salvation. None but God can save sinners.” And then my proud and arrogant mind was humbled down, and with it was humbled down my head ; my heart, which had been eaten up with conceit, and arrogance, and self-sufficiency, found that there was nothing in it which could withstand the awful assaults of temptations, and in utter

helplessness I threw myself on my Father's feet. All sides of the horizon were dark : light suddenly burst forth in one direction and it appeared as if the word "Prayer" was written in golden letters on the gate of the kingdom of God—showing that none entereth God's kingdom except he pass through the gate of prayer—none conquereth sin and temptation unless he humbly, earnestly, and fervently pray. Without wavering or hesitation therefore I at once began to pray to my God. The first day—a blessed day it was—I prayed in the morning and in the night, secretly and humbly. No brother helped me with counsel or encouragement. Nay, I had to conceal the matter from the knowledge of my friends and relatives, lest they should scoff at me. I was sure that as soon as they came to know of it, they would ridicule me and scoff at me, and try to dissuade me if possible from such a noble and godly habit ; and lest such circumstances should happen, I kept the matter a great secret. Day after day I kept on praying, and in the course, I assure you, of a few days I found as it were a flood of light entering into the inmost recesses of my heart and dissipating the darkness of my soul, the darkness of death. Oh, it was cheering moonlight streaming through overhanging clouds of hideous sin. Then I felt great relief, unspeakable comfort. I also felt that I could eat and drink with pleasure. Then I found rest on my bed, and then I found comfort in the company of friends. For I can assure you there was a time in my life when I had almost given up mirth and good humour and cheerfulness, and amusement of all kinds. I felt that the world was dark because my heart was full of darkness ; and had not my gracious and beneficent God revealed to me just at that time this great gospel of salvation, namely, prayer, I cannot think where I would have been to-

night. You would not have seen me in Bombay addressing you from this pulpit.—Oh, it is too much for my feelings to bear—it overpowers me when it enters my mind—the thought where I would have been to-night if God had not taught me to pray!—Prayer to me was the beginning of salvation. It led me and helped me in enquiries after truth ; it brought me into contact with theological works and pious men ;—and through prayer all the other appliances and resources so very necessary for spiritual progress were placed at my disposal by the very same God who had led me thus far. I availed myself of these and humbly went on growing in grace, in purity. Brethren, what I felt to be true in my case I say is true in the case of every man. I assure you it is prayer which ought to be considered as the beginning of religious life—the key to the kingdom of God. Have that, and you have in your hand the means of unlocking the treasures of divine grace. Is it saving knowledge you want?—come and pray ; is there a doubt you want to dispel?—come and pray, is it a weakness you wish to remove?—come and pray ; is it power you want?—come and pray ; is it sin you wish to give up?—come and pray ; is it holiness you want?—come and pray. One precept have I given to all inquirers after truth that have called on me, and whoso cometh to me in future for advice shall find the same answer—“Pray without ceasing,” as was said in days gone by. I will not ask you to pray for riches, fame, bodily comfort or temporal benefits. I am opposed to that doctrine. I recommend prayer for spiritual blessings only,—for spiritual knowledge, for spiritual power, and for spiritual holiness. For these three things pray. If you don't like to take my word on trust, go home and try the experiment, and if on the fourth day of your trial you

find your experiences give the lie to my statement, I shall retract everything I have said. You have as little right to say sugar is bitter before tasting it as you have to deny the efficacy of prayer before you have personally tried its uses. Rest assured every prayer for spiritual blessings if offered with sincerity and earnestness will be granted by the Merciful God. It has been beautifully said—and it is a law of the moral world as unchangeable as physical laws,—“Ask and it shall be given you ; seek and ye shall find ; knock and it shall be opened unto you ; for every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” This is an emphatic assurance of God’s mercy ; and in your own experiences you will find how strictly it is fulfilled in every case. But in order that you may receive what you pray for, you must pray with sincerity, with your whole heart. “Posture is not prayer, words are not wishes :” true prayer is a hungering and thirsting of the heart. It may not express itself in words, it may not observe outward forms, but it is not the less real and effective if it is only a wish of the heart. Language does not constitute, but only expresses and represents prayer, which is in its essence purely spiritual and is heard in secret by God. Let not your thoughts wander about, let there be no discord of contending and unruly inclinations ; when the heart prays, all its thoughts and feelings and wishes must be attuned to the harmony of quiet communion with God, and then only can the blessings sought be realized. It is also necessary that you should not use indefinite generalities in prayer. Do not use the vague commonplaces of formal devotion, such as—“God have mercy on me !” “Lord save me from sin !” But let your prayers indicate special wants to be supplied, special sins to be sacrificed, special blessings

needed. You should avoid empty words, and feel deeply what it is that you want in particular before you address your prayers to God. Freely confess your sins before Him and hide them not under a cloak of smooth but vague words; lay your finger on the particular blots in your character you wish to obliterate; show the Great Physician the special malady from which you seek deliverance, and He will heal it. Above all, my friends, you ought to remember what I have already said about sincerity. You must be sincerely and really anxious to give up sin and become pure and holy. If you harbour in your hearts a secret wish to continue in your sins and wicked enjoyments, your prayers will be all mockery and hypocrisy, and will surely recoil upon you unanswered. In illustration of this I shall read to you the King's soliloquy in Scene III., Act III. of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, as it points out in a most lively and impressive manner that the man who prays to God for forgiveness without really wishing to get rid of the sin which he asks to be forgiven, will find his prayers lost in the air :—

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven ;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder !—Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will ;
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood ?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
To wash it white as snow ? Where'to serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence ?
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd, being down ? Then I'll look up ;
My fault is past. But, O what form of prayer
Can serve my turn ? Forgive me my foul murder !—

That cannot be ; since I am still possess'd
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
 May one be pardon'd and retain the offence ?
 In the corrupted currents of this world,
 Offence's gilded hand may shove my justice ?
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law : But 'tis not so above ;
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature ; and we ourselves compell'd,
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
 To give in evidence. What then ? what rests ?
 Try what repentance can : What can it not ?
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent ?
 O wretched state ! O bosom, black as death !
 O limed soul ; that struggling to be free,
 Art more engag'd ! Help, angels, make assay !
 Bow, stubborn knees ! and, heart, with strings of steel
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe ;
 All may be well !

He then kneels down and tries to pray ; but his struggles and endeavours prove unsuccessful ; and in utter despair he at last cries out :—

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below ;
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

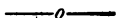
Besides offering individual prayers in solitude, regularly every day, you should try to have family prayers if possible. Husband and wife, brother and sister, parents and children should gather round their God and worship Him as the God of their family. Thirdly, there must be congregational prayers in public meetings, like your Prarthana Somaj, in which all of us must unite as brethren to worship our common Father.

Thus the spirit of true prayer will spread from individuals to families, and from families to communities ; and thus through prayer will individuals, families and the whole Indian nation be purified and regenerated.

Never shall India be regenerated without prayer.

That is a thing with my whole heart I believe, and if any of you individually were to come and ask me whether you could ever be saved with your knowledge, with your deeds, with your reform movements, I would say at once, no such thing will save you. Therefore, I would say to you individually and collectively—I would say to all Indian men and women—pray, pray from to-morrow. And what excuse can you have for not beginning to pray from to-morrow? Just after you rise from your bed, why should you not remember what a brother has told you this evening—told you for your own sake—for Bombay's sake—for your own family's sake—your children's children's sake. Do begin to pray from to-morrow. Set aside your worldly concerns for five minutes at least. If you cannot pray without some direction, I ask you to use this little book for the present [“Theist's Prayer Book”] prepared by a friend and brother of yours. Use one of these prayers at a time, one every day. Parsees, Hindus, brethren of all castes, races and tribes, I beg you all to do this. I will go down on my knees if necessary only to beseech you to pray to God. May God help you and bless you!

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF ENGLAND AND THE ENGLISH.



BRETHREN of the Parthana Somaj, fellow-countrymen and friends, I heartily thank God that He has safely brought me back to my dear fatherland and enabled me to meet you, my friends and countrymen, with renewed health and strength. (Applause.) I appear before you to-night, in compliance with your kind request, in order to give you a short account of my visit to England and my general impressions of that country. You are probably aware that the object which actuated me to undertake the voyage to that distant country was two-fold,—first, to represent the wants and grievances of my countrymen to the British public, and, second, to do all in my humble power to bring about a closer social and spiritual fellowship between England and India—between the West and the East. (Applause.) I am glad to inform you that on the whole the results of my mission are cheering and encouraging in the extreme. (Applause.) I have brought to you glad tidings from the West. The genuine sympathy which thousands of Englishmen and Englishwomen expressed in me and my work cannot fail to encourage us all to persevere in that great and glorious work which God, I

[Babu Keshub Chunder Sen arrived at Bombay from England by the mail on Saturday morning. On the following evening he delivered an address in the Hall of the Framjee Cowasjee Institute.]

believe, has committed to us. (Applause). Whatever the shortcomings and defects of the English nation may be I have seen in that country a noble and a generous heart in the root of society. Let people traduce the character of that nation who have not had an opportunity to dive beneath the surface of things, but those who have studied English character as it is must see that there is an amount of generosity and nobility there which cannot fail to excite our sympathy and interest and approbation. (Hear, hear.) What strikes an Indian in England at first is the geography of that country. Everything there is so tiny and small. The highest mountains in England and Scotland are but mole-hills compared with the stupendous Himalayas, and their largest rivers and streams are not bigger than a drain in India. Everything is small. But the heart of the nation is not small. The people have large and magnanimous minds. Their activity is wonderful. John Bull lives in a state of incessant activity ; he cannot live unless he works. You find him here, there, and everywhere like Hamlet's ghost. You see him in the morning on the streets of London ; off he goes to Edinburgh in the evening, and next day perhaps you see him on the Continent, full of business, untiring activity, ceaseless energy. The charity that I saw in England is commendable, in the extreme. The amount of money, three millions annually, spent in London alone upon works of disinterested charity—the real benevolence and genuine disinterestedness with which not merely hundreds but thousands of men and women, not only of the middle classes but in the higher ranks of society, daily devote their mental and physical energies to the prosecution of works of charity cannot but strike a foreigner as something wonderful. There are, I assure you, thousands of

men and women in that country who live the lives of disinterested reformers—their only object is to bring relief to the poor, the needy, the ignorant and superstitious—their sole object from morning till midnight is to employ all means in their power in order to raise the fallen and strengthen the weak—to feed the hungry and to quench the thirst of those who come to them in a pitiable condition. They send out the light of religion to all parts of the world. Though you may differ you must acknowledge the wonderful character of these disinterested missionaries. In England, after studying the superficial life of the people, and then diving into the inner life of society, you find many things which please you and which exercise on you a wholesome moral influence.

THE SWEET ENGLISH HOME.

I do not think there is in any other part of the world such a thing as a sweet English home. Its sweetness, its purity must command our respect; the well-regulated English family deserves your imitation and study. You see there not merely worldly happiness, temporal matters well managed, daily household duties accomplished with fidelity and honourable integrity, but you see there the spirit of moral righteousness and purity infused into the daily life, even into the petty details of daily transactions. This domestic life in England is not only sweet but pure; there is not only joy and happiness on the one hand, but there is also a stern and severe moral discipline exercised by the elder members of the family, by parents over children.

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ENGLAND.

THE next thing which deserves your attention is certainly the religious life of England. Is there anything in English Christianity which is essentially

superior to all that I saw in other parts of the world? Can I say that the English people, by means of their superior religion and morality, have attained that high condition of the soul which is represented in the Gospel of Christ as the Kingdom of Heaven? I say, No; far from it. England has not realized the Christian kingdom of God. But still there are Christian virtues, and these certainly cannot fail to excite our interest. There is much that is good and pure in the doctrines of the Christian nation, and in their practice too. But I cannot say, after having studied Christian doctrines and Christian life in England in the way I could do during my short stay in that country, that, on the whole, England as a religious nation is superior to the other nations of the world; rather my conviction is that England has yet much to learn from India, as India has yet much to learn from England. If we enter into a sort of moral and spiritual covenant with each other, mutually and independently resolving to supplement our respective deficiencies by receiving and accepting from each other—if we determine not to flatter ourselves nor to flatter the other party, but dispassionately and calmly to receive all that is good in each nation—then I say a glorious result will accrue to both. We have always the frightful Scylla and Charybdis to avoid in matters like this. Indians when they go to England find their heads turned by everything they see in that grand country—everything English is noble and fine; everything Indian is wretched and abominable—(applause)—and so there are hundreds of men in the English community both here and in England who do not like to believe and do not care to make any enquires into the matter, who do not like to believe that there is anything good beyond the pales of orthodox

Christianity, that India is nothing but a land of moral desolation and spiritual destitution, that darkness covers the face of the country, and that there is no redeeming light throughout the length and breadth of India. I protest against what my countrymen say, and against what some Englishmen say. Without adulation or flattery let us go to England and borrow all that is good and great in English society there ; but in the same breath must we insist on every Englishman and Englishwoman, if they have honest and dispassionate minds and hearts, accepting everything that is good and great in our country. It is the wish of our Heavenly Father that as individuals should fraternize and co-operate with each other so should nations do. If no individual is infallible no nation is, and as unless there is a wholesale interchange of hospitality, unless there is cordial, full intercourse between man and man and between woman and woman, there cannot be anything like reformed society ; so unless nations exchange their physical commodities with each other upon universally admitted principles of political economy, unless nations and races and peoples combine to promote the welfare not only of each tribe and race but of all mankind, the world cannot improve, commerce will be paralysed, trade will come to an end and nations will become bankrupts, and beggars. But promote interchange of commodities, promote commerce and trade, promote international intercourse upon temporal as well as upon spiritual matters, and you will find all nations derive vast moral and temporal aid from each other. My visit to England has confirmed this conviction in my mind. I now feel far more strongly than ever I did that it is the duty, the solemn duty, of India and England to cultivate close social and spiritual intercourse with each other. What did I see in

England? Christianity I did see. Charity and love and spirit I did see. But it was mutilated Christianity and a mutilated Christ I saw there. Honestly and boldly I declare in the midst of this public assembly that in the matter of certain Christian virtues the English as a nation do not leave the palm to any other nation on the face of the earth, but what I contend for is that these virtues are not the whole of the Christian virtues—that they do not constitute all that is demanded by Christ of those who say they have faith in him. I saw Christ's hand in England but, alas, I was disappointed in another respect,—I did not see Christ's heart and soul in England. It was the hand of Christ outstretched for the purpose of doing good to England and to the world,—the spirit of Christ's noble charity—the spirit of him who went about doing all manner of good, day after day and night after night, I saw that spirit with my own eyes. I wish I could bless and thank the whole British nation for their fidelity in this respect. "Charity covers a multitude of sins." If that is true anywhere it is true in England, oh noble and disinterested England! There certainly I saw if I saw, it anywhere, the spirit of Christian charity. But where is Christian devotion—where is he who went on the mountains to pray—where is sincere fervent prayer—where is that desire to overcome the temptation of the flesh simply with the all-conquering force of faith and prayer—where is that daily communion with God which Christ commends to his disciples? I did not see much of such devotion in England. I see that in India, in my noble ancestors. Going back thousands of years in the stream of time I find on the heights of those stupendous Himalayas the venerated men of ancient India, with closed eyes, indulging in the sweet happiness of uninterrupted

secret communion with their God. (Applause.) Denounce idolatry and caste, protest against the ten thousand social corruptions that you see in India, but still can you never for one moment make your eyes blind to those great facts you see in early Hinduism—facts which show and unmistakably prove the high state of spiritual expansion which the hearts of our forefathers had attained. This is a fact which must be acknowledged not only by Indians as patriots and men who love to cherish and respect the memory of the past, but also by Englishmen; and I am happy to say liberal thinkers and liberal theologians in England have begun to pay better attention to this subject. And what is the result? By the enquiries of men like Professor Max Muller they have seen with their own eyes as it were, this beautiful gentle stream of genial devotional love, flowing through the length and breadth of the country in ancient India. Now, alas, we do not see its traces even. Where are those devout men who could not live except in prayer—who felt the reality of the spiritual world as we see to-day the realities of the physical and moral world—men who wanted to prove everything upon the ground of direct spiritual testimony—men who distended their hearts and opened the eyes of faith in order to see and worship the Living Father, as one Infinite Spirit. That, I believe, is just the thing which England must accept from India. And what is that but the very spirit of devotion and prayer which Jesus Christ tried to inculcate? The Christian, in order to be a true Christian, must have not only outward works of charity, practical righteousness, and moral rectitude, but also he must have a devout and prayerful heart. Let, then, India learn from England practical righteousness; let England learn from India, devotion, faith, and prayer. Let us learn of each other—let England's spirit of charity

be infused into Hindoo Society—let the millions of my countrymen, Hindoos, Parsees, Mahomedans, all races and sects and denominations of India, believe that Providence has, for noble, benevolent, and wise purposes, entrusted their destinies to England, and that good will eventually come out of such political connection. England is bound to govern our country for the good of our people. Those days are gone by never to return when men thought of holding India at the point of the bayonet—those dark days are gone by when men thought of closing all public schools and colleges in order to prevent the rise of independent thought, the growth of independent public opinion, in Native society. Men are beginning to feel that India is a solemn trust, that the English out in India are acting simply as trustees, responsible and accountable to that God who placed India in their hands for the welfare of the country—(applause)—and that if England does not discharge her duties to India in a truly Christian spirit—if England seeks to crush down 180 millions of people in this glorious country, to destroy their nationality, to extinguish the fire of noble antiquity and the thrill of ancient patriotism—if England's object in holding intercourse with, and governing the people of India is simply to make money and leave the people to themselves in the higher matters of spiritual life,—then I say, Perish British rule this moment. God will not tolerate a Government at this time of the day, based on principles other than those which we recognise as the principles of justice and benevolence. (Applause.)

SECTARIANISM AND BROAD CHURCHISM.

Let us all believe that England's connection with India is Christian. But what is the meaning of that word Christian? By Christianity I never mean a certain number of stereotyped dogmas and doctrines :

by Christianity I do not mean rites and ceremonies. No, for true Christianity says there is no justification in works, nor in external rites, but righteousness, justification and sanctification must be the results of spiritual conversion—must be worked out by faith. That is true Christianity—that I say is true Hindooism, that is true Mahomedanism, that is true Zoroastrianism. By faith shall man be saved. Not if you are proud of ten thousand works of charity. —not if you have inundated all Bombay with outward institutions of charity. No. If you have faith in the Living Father and your whole heart has been converted and regenerated, then I say you are fit for the Kingdom of God. And England is still as far from the Kingdom of Heaven as you and I are. (Applause.) We are still far from that integrity and fullness of true theistic life (call it Christian life if you like);—we are all yet far from that. Now my Hindu, Mahomedan, and Parsee friends, you may boast of your religion and pure daily life, but before the tribunal of God you will find that God's judgment does not pronounce a favourable decree on your life—you will find you have yet much to learn. Then, I say, let your Christian missionaries and let your Christian government admit the truth of this,—that they will not by preaching dogmas and doctrines but by bringing the spirit of true devotion, firm faith and fervent communion with God on the one hand and Christ's noble charity and untiring industry on the other, do any permanent good to this country. Let the duties of Christians and of the Christian Government be to introduce these into the life blood of Native society in India. (Applause.) In England there is still much that you would see of bigotry and superstition,—there are sects far more numerous in England than I ever thought. Two hundred and fifty small narrow sects into which

Christendom in England has been split up! Oh a lamentable spectacle indeed!—that in the name of him who preached “Peace on earth and good will among men” there should be so many narrow sects in England! It is a thing which we cannot but deplore sincerely and truly. And yet on the other hand so far as liberal thinkers are concerned I must say I have seen in England a larger amount of liberal thought and feeling than I hoped to find there. It is something wonderful. The Christian mind in England is endeavouring to throw off the fetters, the bonds of sectarian dogmatism which have shackled it for many years and centuries—that mind is coming out truly and independently in order to acknowledge and vindicate true free religious liberty. The broad church in England represents broad Christian thought, sympathy and charity. Thousands of men of every sect;—not merely in the Church of England but among dissenters and in every Christian sect—thousands are beginning to feel sectarianism is the curse of the country, and are determined to protest against it and to preach brotherly love and charity. I hope that the more such feelings grow, the greater and purer and closer will be the intercourse of those sects not only with each other but with other religious sects too. There is at present amongst the learned thinkers of England what is called the science of comparative theology just springing up. I am sanguine about the results of such a movement as that. When we find that systems of religions that have prevailed for centuries in different parts of the world can be studied as they ought to be, then, I say, anxious and dispassionate Christians must admit that the love of Christ did not begin when he was born into this world but that the true spirit of Christ is to be found everywhere—it is a love that loveth every man that cometh into the world. Every-

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thing that is good and true is for Christ to love and, if there be good men and women in India, I am sure, let Christians of the present day say what they will, Christ, Jesus Christ, with loving arms extended would embrace such brothers and sisters as brethren in a common faith,—as God's sons and daughters. (Applause.)

LIONIZING.

Now, my friends, you want to know what England has done and is going to do for us. Have I done anything in England? I must tell you that they lionized me and made too much of me. I protested against it;—the process of lionizing was painful to me. They flattered me, but I was not to blame. I went to discharge my duty humbly but they put me on platforms and carried me from town to town and from province to province and from meeting to meeting. Whatever their objects were certainly the results of such a movement proved useful, because I had thus the means of extending my acquaintance. Thousands upon thousands came to hear me. You may say, "All that demonstration shows only a temporary ebullition of popular adulation and flattery, directed towards a man whom they did not, and cannot understand and who is really unworthy of such popular favour, such popular sympathy." I admit I was decidedly most unworthy of honours such as those, but still I had some honest truths to tell, and was not the English nation to come to hear me? But I sincerely believe that that Holy and Merciful Father who is interested in the welfare of my country and of England brought thousands to me in order that they might hear from the lips of a Native of India what he had to say concerning the welfare and advancement of his country. (Applause.) Many came to scoff at me; many came to put me down; many knew not who I was;—but I spoke truth, and

I am sure I was always honestly and humbly endeavouring to speak nothing but the truth as I believed it to be true. I said to all my English friends and to the public of England that there were great defects in the political administration of India—I told them the Christian government, though professedly Christian, were not in some respects carrying on their duties in a Christian spirit. And what was the result? Thousands of hands were raised on all sides indicating hearty appreciation of what I said—not one or two individuals here and there, or a few families, but a thrill of public fervour as it were, seemed to run throughout all the meetings,—all stood up sometimes in order to show that dishonesty, oppression and injustice must be put down. And who said so? The men and women of the English people. (Laughter.) And what does that show? That shows that the English people are really and sincerely anxious to blot out everything that is bad in the government of India. Profoundly ignorant they are as to the actual state of things in our country. You must go and enlighten them; but I can assure you if you can have access only to the inmost recesses of the British heart, there sympathy, nothing but sympathy, will you find. Protest against anything bad in our countrymen, and let Englishmen feel that your patriotism has not blinded you to the defects of your countrymen but that you are anxious to emancipate them from idolatry, and caste, and ignorance, and social corruption, and wickedness,—and in the same breath point out the defects of character in English people here, and they will receive your words, I assure you, with the utmost alacrity and cheerfulness. In fact I was oftentimes amused to find that what I said against English people was received with cheers; and all my words which were meant as a sort of encomium on the British people fell flat on the

audience. What does that show? Is that not a wonderful trait in the British character, that they are so honest that they like to hear a foreigner say what is wrong in their character? What better proof can you have of the national honesty? 'I tell John Bull his faults and he praises and admires you. (A laugh) Then, I say, England requires only to be enlightened in order to do justice to India.

WHAT THE QUEEN AND ENGLAND THINK OF INDIA.

Against disloyalty I loudly and vehemently protest. To such a Christian sovereign as Her Majesty Queen Victoria let all hearts be raised with feelings of loyalty. (Applause.) Let the hearts of all Hindoos, Mahomedans and Parsees be raised in order to shower blessings on that sovereign. (Applause.) What she herself told me, vastly encourages me,—she takes the deepest interest in the welfare of our countrymen and especially our countrywomen. What I have found to be the case with the English public I have found to be equally the case with Her Majesty. The whole English people there, from one end of the country to the other, are, I say, favourably disposed to your country. There is no desire to do you injustice—there is no desire to oppress you or to treat you in a tyrannical manner;—on the contrary there is a strong and growing sense of the vast importance of India. People used to think in former days that India was not larger than Middlesex and that the people of India were nothing but a parcel of savages. (Laughter.) But now opinions are changed and altered. Now they are beginning to feel, when they look to the results of these universities by their effects on hundreds of promising and energetic young men, that India is really a great country.

as by developing the physical resources of the
 you can make India what she is destined to
 developing the spiritual and moral resources

of the nation you can make India a truly great and glorious country. (Applause).

BRITISH REGARD FOR NATIONALITY.

That is the feeling of England at the present day. Is not that good news? And what are you going to do after hearing such cheering news as this? Do you mean to sleep over an assurance so generous and encouraging as this? When the British public stand up and so manfully and clearly assure you of their sympathies and desire to help you forward in the work of national reformation, then I say you must rise as men and show your appreciation of the generosity of the British public. I can assure you it has nothing like a desire to extinguish nationality. Everything I said against denationalization roused the sympathy and cheers of the British public. They are jealous about their own nationality. They would not allow any foreigner to make an invasion on their own sacred nationality, and when I spoke as a patriot they felt I was a patriot and was justified in defending what was good and great in the institutions and religion of my country. (Applause.) And so they are prepared to respect your positions—they are determined by legislative enactments to put down such institutions as Suttee and to promote the remarriage of widows—they think Government ought to assist the people in their reforms by sympathy, not with a view to force upon you English notions and ideas and institutions.

ENGLISHMEN AND THEIR DINNERS.

Would you like to eat and drink in the English way? I really think it is barbarous. (Laughter and applause.) A vegetarian in the midst of carnivorous England! (Applause.) I am sure if the people of India were to see the horrors of the meat market in London they would never send their little children to England. (Laughter.) Certainly horrid

English beef is a horror. I was invited to many dinner parties, and what did I invariably see there? Why, the dining room appeared to be more like a Zoological garden; there were all sorts of fowls of the air, the beasts of the wilderness, and fishes of the sea and creeping things laid on the table. (Laughter.) They were about to start into a new life as it were. (Shrieks of laughter.) I need not say I could not positively say whether they were alive or dead. These are the things which our English friends eat. I am glad I have run away from England. (Laughter.) But English fashions and dinners! These are really two things that are barbarous. Excuse my saying so, but I honestly believe they are barbarous. (Laughter.)

PROTEST AGAINST ENGLISH FASHIONS AND DINNERS.

I think there ought to be a protest against what is called "fashion" in England. It is a dangerous thing and makes frightful progress. The tail of the ladies' dress should be protested against and the horrors of English dinners ought to be protested against, and if you, my countrymen, are really anxious to promote the welfare of your country, avoid these two things. (Laughter.) Import into your country all that is good in England but not these horrid things.

ENGLISH POVERTY AND ENGLISH CHARITY.

Do not allow yourselves to be carried away by the idea that every thing that pertains to that country is grand and glorious. (Applause.) No, there are the worst men in England—(applause)—as there are the best everywhere. The worst, the lowest, the most wicked are to be found in it. Destitution, poverty in its worst and most frightful phases is found in the streets of London—ignorance, frightful and appalling, pervade the masses of the people. These know not their God; they are worse than those whom

Christians denounce as heathen. There is a large quantity of heathenism—too much I may say—in Christian England—there is much ignorance, much spiritual destitution. And what does all this show? That, how, even in the centres of civilization there are such bad things; and when you see these with your own eyes pray do not indiscriminately censure the whole community, for the more degraded the more lost, the more appalling the disease, the greater the antidote—the greater the amount of intellectual darkness the greater is the anxiety to promote education among the masses of the people—the more there is of wickedness the more pure-hearted earnestness there is in order to send out what are called biblewomen and missionaries, and readers, and moral and religious teachers, of all shades of opinion and all positions in society, in order to elevate the spiritual sufferings and supply the spiritual wants of those people. (Applause.) So England by her own destitution has made herself immensely charitable. The ignorance and wickedness of some of the people have made a large body of philanthropists, ready even now to sacrifice their blood for the glory and redemption of England,—and not only to England are their energies confined but you see them in all parts of the world. All I have to request English residents in India to do is this—let them help us to have English charity here. There are many who have fallen into the lowest depths of sin, ignorance and superstition. Let us, then, have the thousands of charitable institutions you have in England transplanted into our country. Such we like and must have. While we guard our nationality let us bring from England the charitable institutions—let all good and charitable men and women come out to regenerate this country. Against denationalization I have protested, but do not understand me to

say that you shall keep back the tide of trade and civilization—that you shall say to the wave of the refining sea of true refinement and philanthropy coming from the West to the East, “Thus far shalt thou come and no further”—but you must allow the advancing wave to come and encroach on our land, —to break down the multitudinous evils that have been allowed to accumulate in the course of centuries and break down the embankments of superstition, idolatry and caste. Let us be prepared for that—let it be proved to God and the world that England has nobly fulfilled her mission in India, (applause) and that all India is now freed from ignorance and prejudice. Oh, what a glorious day that will be when we shall see throughout the length and breadth of our country such pious, charitable and Christian ladies as we see in England, and such disinterested, generous, Christian-minded men as we see in England. There are some men and women of this character in India, I must say. Oh may their number multiply—may the number of those who come to India simply for the sake of money be less and less and may those who come to India for nothing but the glory and redemption of India be greater day by day. (Applause.)

APPEAL TO HIS COUNTRYMEN.

Before I depart from this hall allow me, my friends and fellow-countrymen, to say that, having returned from that great Country, I cannot allow you to sleep in such a critical age as this. I can tell you in distinct and emphatic terms that England, and the whole of the civilised world through England, has assured me of Western sympathy with Eastern nations, and specially with India the noble representative of the East. (Applause.) Such assurance carry home, but do not go to bed till you have offered an humble and heartfelt prayer to your

God and the God of India and England that He may put into your mind a noble resolution from this night not to shrink back with detestable cowardice, and timidity, from a duty which must be done—from sacrifices which must be submitted to. Pray that He may put into your mind energy and resolution which will compel and cause you to submit to all manner of privations and sufferings in order to do good unto your country. Be loyal to the Queen and to the British Government. Be thankful to all those, whether men and women of your own country, or men and women of England who have in any way done you good. Let not our enemies, let not our friends say that we are wanting in gratitude. Let all India unite in one chorus of sweet and unanimous gratitude, flowing towards God as an appreciation on the part of the whole nation of the blessings that have been conferred upon the people by foreign nations. (Applause.) While you have love and thankfulness tell your hands to be active. Now Prarthana Somaj brethren, will you call upon all Bombay to come forward and unite with you? Are not the people of Bombay believers in the one living God? Am I to be told at this meeting that educated and enlightened natives of India, Hindus, Mahomedans, or Parsees, believe in idols? Enlightened men still tied and fettered by the horrid bonds of idolatry and supersition? No; in your hearts, whatever you may say, I see an acknowledgment of the one true God. Then stand up and say, in India the banners of truth must be unfurled. Lo, the light is streaming in from the West; lo, ten thousand hands are outstretched over mountains, across seas and oceans—outstretched to redeem the millions of the Indian population from ignorance and sin and idolatry. Then we shall not be idle. When all the world says to India, “Arise” let not

India stop. Now are the grand and glorious days of reformation at hand—the Kingdom of Heaven, methinks, is drawing nigh for India's redemption. Sleep not, humbly I beg and beseech you I will go down at your feet and most humbly I am prepared to beseech and implore you to take this exhortation into your thoughts. Many of our countrymen and countrywomen are dying in ignorance and darkness, in sin and superstition. Say not, then, that indolence, and apathy, hypocrisy and inaction shall characterise young India, but rather say from this night forward there shall not be compromise or sleep, apathy, hypocrisy or inaction, but young India knows what England says to her, knows what liberal generous minds in England on the Continent and in America say at the present moment. The voice of civilization is "Onward, forward and Heaven-ward," and let India's motto from this night be "Onward, forward, Heavenward." (Prolonged applause.)

A brief impressive prayer was then offered by the lecturer after which the company sang one or two hymns.

The meeting then separated.

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF NATIVE SOCIETY.

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Thursday, 14th March 1872.

YOUR Excellency, Your Honour, Ladies and Gentlemen.—That was indeed a very important day in the history of India when the English first set foot on its soil. From that ever-memorable day we may date the commencement of a new and glorious era in our social, moral, and intellectual life. Then for the first time was opened to the view of my fellow-countrymen a new world, a world of new thoughts, new literature and science, and new civilization. The leading nation in Europe met the leading nation in Asia, and the sight was indeed morally sublime and grand. It was no merely a mechanical contiguity of races. I may say the elements supplied by each race entered into a sort of chemical solution and fusion. Fermentation was the natural consequence, and since that time several important changes, mental and material, have transpired in this part of the world. At that time the foundation was laid of very great changes, which

The Address was delivered extempore by Babu Keshub-Chunder Sen, Chairman of the Education Section, at the Annual Meeting of the Bengal Social Science Association on Thursday the 14th March 1872 before an audience of nearly twelve hundred men including His Excellency the Viceroy and Lady Napier, His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief. Hon. J. B. Phear, and Revd. Dr. Mitchell.

up to the present time have continued to affect the moral and social interests of 180 millions of the population of this country. The effect of this international contact was instantaneous. Western civilization burst upon us with the tremendous fury and the resistless force of a powerful current. It swept away the accumulated errors and corruptions of ages; it broke into atoms the strongholds of superstition, ignorance, and social evil. What the ultimate issue of all the conflicts and struggles that are going on at present will be, it is impossible at the present moment accurately to determine and confidently to divine. Some minds may be rendered extremely anxious as they see that there are several things of a very discouraging character in the events which are transpiring around us. To my mind the whole scene is extremely hopeful and encouraging. The finger of Providence is working on all sides; and the history of native reform shows only the steady growth of a great nation, the steady and continual development of our national life under encouraging auspices. It may be supposed that the vessel of native society, torn from her ancient moorings, may be led into tempests, and may be wrecked after all. But it appears to me that there is evidence enough on all sides which conclusively proves that the vessel, after undergoing all manner of trials, after overcoming all fluctuations, and after riding bravely and triumphantly over all the waves of doubt, disadvantage and danger, which may beat against her, she will ultimately enter the harbour of true civilization and peace. (Cheers.) If we look attentively at the progress of events, we cannot but be struck with the fact that for several years past the work of native reform has been more of a destructive than of a constructive character. All the evils which had accumulated in this country in the

course of ages at once succumbed to the advancing effects of civilization, and the violent onslaughts, directed by Western education and refinement, naturally tended to destroy all that was wrong and demoralising in this country. So we see, one after the other, the moral, social, and intellectual evils in India gradually fading away. The work is still going on—I mean the work of destruction. The work of reconstruction is still before us—not behind. Let us for one moment consider what these agencies are which have been at work for the destruction of social and moral evils? The most powerful agency, I may say, is English education. Wherever the schoolmaster is doing his work, earnestly, thoroughly and conscientiously, he is inevitably turning the minds of the present generation of our countrymen from all that is wrong, from all manner of untruth and error. The effects, as I have said, are inevitable. It is impossible to adhere firmly to the ancient state of things, if we once place ourselves thoroughly under the influence of sound and liberal English education. The effects of education may be seen in the very depths of our consciousness. It is not merely a superficial work which has been carried on as some people imagine. No; not only our ideas and feelings even our habits and customs, and the experiences of daily life, undergo a great change under the influence of English education. We have cast away, in fact, all our old modes of thinking and acting, and are entering into, as it were, new regions of thought and action. The effects of English education have been, on the whole, of an extremely revolutionary character; and if our schools and colleges be allowed to continue uninterruptedly and unmolested in their work, they will doubtless in the end train up a new generation of regenerated and reformed men.

Christian missions in India may be accepted as another powerful cause working in the midst of Native society for many years, and effecting great changes in our social life. Without entering at all into theological controversy which the constitution of this Association wisely interdicts, I may safely venture to say that Christian missionaries, working in different parts of this great empire, have succeeded in improving the habits and views, the feelings and ideas, of the people ; they have succeeded in promoting inquiry after truth ; and this spirit of inquiry, though fostered and kept up directly by religious agency, has, in the natural course of things, made inroads into all departments of thought and speculation in order to satisfy itself as to what truth is.

Next, I may be allowed to mention the Native church, called the Brahmo Somaj, which has also exhibited its power in revolutionizing Native society. Far less aggressive indeed than Christianity, it has worked its way silently and almost imperceptibly into the heart of the nation, and it has been emancipating people, if not by thousands, at least by hundreds from all that is unclean and immoral, all that is intellectually wrong and socially degrading, and it has been gradually leading numbers of young men and women from the thralldom of sin and the bondage of impurity. In theory and in practice it has been endeavouring to place before the nation a new mode of life altogether.

Lastly, I will invite your attention to the action of the Legislative. The British Government, justly called paternal, has always helped Native reformers in the sacred work of reforming the people. When the leaders of Native society, more than forty years ago, got up an agitation for the suppression of the barbarous rite known as Suttee, the Legislature did not, in spite of great opposition, shrink from the noble

work of according material assistance to the Native gentlemen who got up the movement. Although they were earnest, yet they were weak. They could not by their own power exterminate an institution which had been existing in the country for many ages. In order to annihilate this barbarous practice, they very wisely sought the strong aid of the law. That aid was readily given ; and since that time we have seen the salutary effects of this legislative enactment. Subsequently, the Legislature passed a law removing all obstacles in the way of the remarriage of Hindu widows. That was indeed a valuable boon conferred on Native society. It was welcomed by thousands with heart-felt gratitude, and its moral effects future generation will bear testimony to. Thus the schoolmaster, the missionary, and the legislator, have combined in order to help the nation forward in an honourable career of intellectual and social progress and civilization. (Applause.) But all this work has been, as I have already told you more of a destructive character. Obstacles have been removed ; foul branches have been cut off from the tree of Native society ; the maladies and the diseases which had been afflicting the organism of Native society have been cured ; but nothing of a solid and positive character has yet been given to the people. The Natives have been emancipated from ignorance—not only men, but also women. Schools and colleges have been established in different parts of the country with a view to give intellectual training to boys and girls—a training which has, I must say, succeeded in dispelling the gloom of ignorance which had been brooding over the face of this part of the globe for many centuries. Idolatry has been shaken. That distinctions of caste are absurd and mischievous, thousands of educated Natives in different parts of

the country readily and cheerfully admit. Yet I may say caste still rears its proud head in our midst. we have succeeded in making successful onslaughts on idolatry. but our attacks on the strong and powerful system of caste which prevails in this country have not proved so efficacious. Yet, however, some of the restrictions of caste have got slackened in course of time, and we do not feel the rigour of the institution. It is gratifying to observe that the absurd and cruel custom which prevented Native women from receiving benefits of education has been removed, and thousands of girls to-day cheerfully attend schools belonging to Government or managed by Native gentlemen—schools where these girls go day after day, and receive with the greatest alacrity the instruction imparted to them, The zenana mission is also working successfully and powerfully in Hindu homes, spreading the light of knowledge amongst many who come forward cheerfully and gratefully to receive it.

But the question after all is—have the individuals who constitute this nation, has the nation as a whole, received a strong, solid and positive, training, whose effects will survive all the evils that may come in future, all the contingencies incident to our national existence? Can we stand forward and say, we are really growing, as a nation, or that the individuals of whom Native society is composed of are really growing better, wiser, and holier men after all? Have our women received sound education? Is the work of reformation upon which we are congratulating ourselves at the present moment a mere superficial varnish, or is deep? Is the work that is going on around us a work of radical reformation or is it simply patchwork? Are we trying to heal the wounds as they expose themselves to view or has the native reformer, like a skilled surgeon, probed deep into

the bottom of these wounds and succeeded in giving the patient a new constitution, full of renewed life and vitality, full of all that is noble, strong, and abiding. All these are, however, problemetical, some may admit, but others will find equal reasons for dissenting. To my mind it appears that we have yet to reconstruct Native society. We have given a death blow to ancient Native institutions but we have not succeeded in bringing out new life from the effects of such annihilation. From the ashes of our extinct national life, from the remnants of demolished Native society, must arise a new life and a new fabric, destined to shew forth unto distant nations the effects of England's political and social rule in India. (Hear, hear.)


How, then, are we to reconstruct Native society? First let us look to individuals. The reconstruction of individual character may, in other words, be described as the formation of character. Friends and countrymen, you will allow me to say that your character is not yet formed. Certainly you understand what I mean. Perhaps you know what is wrong, and are capable of distinguishing what is right from wrong, truth from untruth, solid fact from error, righteous deeds from sin. But have you succeeded in ennobling your nature to such an extent as to stand forward before the rest of the world, and take your place by the side of other nations? Are you better men on the whole? I am sorry to say—and I have proof which bears irrefragable testimony to what I say—that a large amount of hypocrisy, dishonesty, moral imbecility, and insincerity, has entered into the composition of the character of the present generation of my countrymen. This, I must say, is the inevitable consequence of the present state of society. Passing through a period of transition, we have gathered

together elements of character from the east and the west: we have inherited certain failings from our ancestors, and we have also with equal readiness imbibed vices from the west. So the Native character at the present moment is not what it was a hundred years ago. Our forefathers had a character different in many essential respects from the character that we at present possess. We may boast of our superior civilization and refinement, of our intellectual scholarship; but, on the whole, we are in many respects, I say, inferior to our ancestors in point of character; and for this reason that our character is not yet formed. Imperceptibly we have given up much of what was good in the national life of our country; we have imitated Englishmen in many respects but I may be allowed to say that we have been slow in acknowledging and adopting those noble traits which are to be found in the character of Englishmen. We may have imitated their weak points and their failings, but we have not, as we should, manfully, and in spite of opposition, taken into our souls, and assimilated by our nature, the good traits of English life. What, then, is the result of this contact of the English with the native races? The effect, as might be anticipated, has been encouraging prospectively, but discouraging in its immediate effects. We hope to grow better in time. England has come to our help and if there are failings, errors of judgment or ever vices amongst us at the present moment, all these I hope and trust, will be obliterated in the course of time. As soon as we have got out of the trials of transition, as soon as the disturbed and agitated mind of the nation settles down tranquilly, and all this excitement has subsided, then shall the vices we have been gathering be taken away from us, and we shall see, with eyes wide open, that though we had

been changing ourselves, we had not always been changing our intellectual and social life for the good things of the west, but that we had adopted some of the new and fashionable vices of the present day.

Now, then, let us see whether our character stands high in the estimation even of our own countrymen. No, our uneducated countrymen find fault with us, point out several deficiencies in our character. They applaud and admire our education, but at the same time they say that the younger men of our schools and colleges are not, on the whole, so honest, so pure in character, as the generation that has gone before. How are we to rectify such a state of thing? We look to our schools and colleges for the remedy. Our educationists must give us *moral* training. (Cheers.) I should call upon Government to introduce an effective system of moral training into our schools and colleges. If our young men are not, on the whole, better than our countrymen in times gone by, what is the use of mere intellectual cramming? I admit that we have read Shakespeare and Milton; but I find that we, require a solid and firm substratum to enable us to rear upon it a strong moral character. (Applause.) To prove the laxity of the moral training imparted at present, if you try to tempt a young man, you will easily find that his education is not proof against temptation. Many intelligent young men have ruined their character. I hope and trust our moral training will be proportionate to our intellectual training. I sincerely hope that all such schoolmasters as have not set good examples in the direction of moral character will be asked to retire immediately (cheers), and that the sacred task of educating the next generation will be entrusted to better hands. The principle of non-interference in religion, which the Government has systematically

adhered to in all times, is a principle which I thoroughly uphold. I think the Government is quite right in excluding doctrinal education and dogmatic teaching from schools and colleges. But at the same time allow me to say that the exclusion of dogmatic theological teaching does not necessarily mean an exclusion of such training as may tend to give the students a better character. (Applause.) If we are to neglect theological teaching, does it follow that we should be oblivious of the claims which our young men have upon us as moral and responsible agents? Certainly it is the duty of every schoolmaster to train up the young men in all that is right, and good, and pure. There may be some practical difficulty in the way. If we exclude the Bible from our schools and colleges, if we exclude the Hindu Vedas and the Mahomedan Koran, what are we to substitute in their place? I immediately reply, Natural Theology—some work or works like "Paley's Natural Theology." Let us teach our young men the wonders of science; let us open their eyes to those marvellous proofs of design which we see all around us, and which prove the presence of a living Creator to Whom we are all morally responsible. These subjects might easily be explained and taught without any reference to theological dogmas whatever. The moral relations of life, the duties that we owe to our fellow countrymen, to our superiors, to our parents, to our wives—duties, in fact, to all those who surround us—may be explained by the teacher, not simply in connection with the text-books which are at present used, but as forming a distinct subject of training and instruction. When prizes are awarded, let a premium be set upon moral training, and upon purity of character. Let, in fact, all the students of our schools and colleges be led to believe that is the earnest



desire of Government to exclude everything that has the appearance of immorality from the teachers and the students and that the Government will resolutely discharge the duty of enforcing strict moral discipline amongst the alumni of its schools and colleges. When this is universally known, then I say, will our young men learn to respect their superiors, and perform aright the duties they owe to all around them; then not only will our students receive better intellectual culture and moral training but they will carry home the simple truths of our morality, which they will practise in their daily lives. (Hear, hear.) What I have said has reference to the formation of individual character. We want to train up a number of individuals amongst the Natives, capable of commanding respect, not only in India, but amongst the surrounding nations. If we do not foster honesty and moral purity in the individual, the nation will continue in a state of immorality, in spite of schools and colleges, in spite of all superficial embellishments.

Now let us turn to Native homes. After having reconstructed the individual character, we must reconstruct the homes. We must give to woman her right place in society. I admit that the Native woman has studied and read a little history, geography, arithmetic, Bengali and English literature, and perhaps succeeded in gathering the rudiments of the physical sciences. But after all, she has not found her rightful position in society. Her character even is less formed than that of the male population of India. If we have not thoroughly constructed our character upon right and firm principles, our women certainly are in a more miserable and wretched condition. The Native woman has made herself troublesome to her parents, and, on the other hand troublesome to her husband.

She has given up reading the *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*, but she has not shown any special proclivities for the writings of Shakespeare and Milton. She does not sympathise with the elderly women in her family in the matter of domestic management. In fact, she does not seem to possess sufficient knowledge of domestic economy. She has gone even to the extent of making herself ridiculous in that respect in the eye of those whom she is accustomed to regard as her superiors. On the other hand, she cannot sympathise with her husband. Hence is it impossible for her to expect to please her parents on the one hand and her husband on the other. Thus her position is one of helplessness, and wretchedness. She is not satisfied with herself in the midst of circumstances such as these. Government has merely done its duty in providing her with some education, but she has not received sufficient education to be an ornament to her family. Situated as she is, she wants better training from us. We should, without any loss of time, adopt and introduce a more efficient system of zenana education. I have heard astute and sagacious statesmen, I have heard men like Lord Lawrence and the late lamented Viceroy say that the duty of Government is not to go much beyond zenana teaching, for female education might in some degree excite alarm among the native population, might be interpreted as a sort of covert attack upon the cherished institutions of the country. Although there are many girls' schools in different parts of the country, yet our statesmen and rulers attach the utmost importance to zenana education. If it be true that we cannot expect much benefit from our public schools, and that we ought to look chiefly to home education, we ought to find out the best teachers to admit into our families. If it be true

that much good is expected to result from zenana teaching, we must do our best to satisfy those who come forward and say that, in spite of general progress and enlightenment, they will continue to give education to their wives and daughters and sisters in their own homes, and will never allow them to stir beyond the pale of the zenana. But, certainly, I would protest against all attempts to close our schools and colleges. For a century at least our attention and energy should be directed chiefly to zenana education. If that be so, we should have a large number of female teachers sent out from England, or, what would be better, governesses should be trained in this country. The best plan, however, would be to educate Native female teachers. (Applause.)

Another question that we should consider is that of female emancipation. Already the subject has attracted a large share of public attention. During the last few years this subject has been discussed in newspapers, at public meetings, and in other places. I should certainly be the last person to provoke unpleasant controversy on a subject of such importance, but it would not be out of place to say a word or two on the subject. My sympathy is with those who say that woman must have her rights just as much as man has. The question of woman's freedom is a subject of paramount importance to us at the present moment. How can we solve the difficulty? Can we for one moment justify ourselves in denying liberty and freedom to our women? No. But freedom is a relative term. We cannot accord freedom to woman according to one universal and uniform standard. No subject is more warmly discussed in England at present than that of women's rights. How far do those rights extend? It is impossible to fix any limit. There are some who

would go even to the extent of allowing women to enlist themselves in the army. (Laughter.) Certainly we are not going so far as that. But still we must say that Native women ought to be taken out of their present system of bondage, social and domestic. (Applause.) They ought to receive freedom of thought and action ; they ought to have a clearly defined position in society. But my sympathy is not with those who say that they will give women freedom without education ; they will permit them to move in society without looking to their intellectual and moral culture. These men would give the first place to freedom and emancipation, and they believe that all other reforms would follow. I should, however, place education, moral training, and social reformation first, and these will, in the natural course of things, lead to what is called the emancipation of women (Cheers.) It is impossible for any man, however courageous and powerful he may be, however strong his intellect, however eminent his political position, to stand as an obstacle in the way of Native female emancipation after education and moral training have been imparted to our women. The Native women will themselves claim from us with a powerful voice and extort an uncompromising acknowledgment of their right. It is impossible, I say, to immure a Native woman in the zenana if she has received a sound education. But, then, do not bring about violent changes in this matter. It is a most delicate experiment, and ought to be tried in a most delicate manner. We ought to seek for, and certainly we shall receive in the course of time, the valuable assistance of philanthropic English ladies in this matter. When they have taken a good number of Native ladies under their care, then, I can say the best results will follow. We should try

to establish a number of boarding houses where women will not only be trained up in intellectual knowledge, but will also be able to learn domestic economy and receive a sound moral training. And then they will be able to come forward and take their rightful place in society of their own accord; they will come and claim, desire and receive ultimately their real position in society. Then I say, none will be able to hinder the consummation of so necessary a work of reform. I therefore exhort you not to lose heart in this matter, and not to be rash. Do not entertain the spirit of sudden innovation in your mind, but go on slowly and calmly. Slow and sure is the progress of reformation. (Hear, hear.) When woman has taken her place in society then we shall be enabled to enjoy purified and reformed homes.

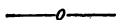
Lastly, we shall try to reform Native social customs. How can we reconstruct Native society on the basis of right and beneficial customs. Premature marriage, the prohibition of widow marriage, bigamy and polygamy, wrong views of the duties of husband and wife, all these evils are concentrated in the peculiar institution of Hindu marriage, and act as insurmountable obstacles in the way of Native reformation. How can we sweep away so many unclean things? Only by adopting a better system of marriage! I need not say much on this subject because I, in common with many others, hopefully look forward to the passing of that Bill which is at present before the Legislature—a Bill which will enable Native reformers to marry according to their educated intellects and their enlightened consciences and which will enable man and woman to contract marriages, in the presence of God voluntarily and freely. Then marriage will be a sacred, social, and domestic institution in this country, as it is in other

countries ; then polygamy and bigamy will be completely exhibited and be rendered penal in the eye of the law. (Applause.) Educated men and women will marry after they have attained proper marriageable age and when they understand their mutual duties. They will not find any civil disabilities preventing them from contracting marriage but will be allowed to marry lawfully, and according to their own conscience. (Cheers.)

These, gentlemen, constitute the platform of social reformation which I have the honour to present to you at this anniversary meeting. My object in addressing you this evening has been simply to present a few suggestive thoughts and ideas which I call upon you to carry home, in order that you may think over them, and deduce such practical principles as they may suggest to you. Go forth and think that you are men from whom the British Government expects a great deal. Try by your conduct to wipe off the stigma of hypocrisy and dishonesty which has been hitherto attached to your character. The scintillations caused by the friction which is constantly going on between new and old ideas, conclusively show that something is coming—that all these sparks will accumulate into a flame which will make itself visible from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. (Hear, hear.) We are all hopefully looking forward to the day when we shall have reformed individuals, reformed homes and reformed society. Come, my fellow-countrymen and friends, let us join together and enter into a crushing crusade against the evils that surround us. We have received the greatest possible aid from without. Now the duty which is peculiarly our own has to be done. Reform, in order to be lasting, must be indigenous. When our friends have done their duty, let us come forward and take hold of the aid

and act ourselves, and then we shall be in a position to say that we deserve the aid that has been accorded to us, and we shall be able to join together as a reformed nation, and proclaim to all the world the benefits of the British rule. (Cheers.)

GOD'S SPECIAL DISPENSATION IN INDIA.



CHINSURAH, 26th October, 1879.

INDIA'S God, cause Thy grace to descend upon us that we may prove true to Thee and to our Motherland. All-Perfect, All-holy God, fill us with Thy holy presence, inspire my lips with Thy holy wisdom that I, Thy humble servant, may speak words of faith and hope. Father, give us Thy grace.

Fellow countrymen, I believe that God has given us a special Dispensation. He has selected this country to save it. He has kindled in India a holy fire that will disperse all moral and spiritual gloom that has for centuries covered the face of the country. India is now under the benign influences of God's special grace. All seers and prophets of old India are before us. We see in India the relics of fallen greatness. We have heard a voice from God to establish His kingdom in India. We are in a time of prophetic wisdom. We have seen strange things and we have received communications from Heaven. The prophets of by gone ages studied nature, and through nature they received inspiration. Our forefathers contemplated God on the heights of Himalayas. They saw with eyes raised upward the Spirit of God, they saw the beauty of God in flowers, in rivers and everywhere. All the scientists of these days acknowledge the existence of a mighty uncreated force under all these natural phenomena ;

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but they dare not call it God. They have contaminated and sophisticated themselves by false philosophy. They are wallowing in the mire of scepticism. They would not admit that God's communications are made to us now as directly as they were made in olden times to the ancient seers and prophets. To the ancient prophets all nature was full of God. Some of them used to baptize their followers with water: They used the plain crystal water for human sanctification. Water is nature's high priest. There in every drop of water is the indwelling presence of God. But we are forgetful of God, we do not behold Him although He encircles us on all sides. God is everywhere or He is nowhere. If my soul is infidel I can see Him nowhere. Faith beholds Him in every grain of corn or in every blade of grass. Do you sincerely believe in God? Is He not present to-day as He was present thousand years back? Is not God's inspiration universal and everlasting? India's God is not confined to this place or that place. Did not your prophet Chaitanya behold God everywhere? Know ye not that ye are the temples of the Living God? Upon the pedestal of your own heart I wish to establish God's throne. Why shall we undertake a pilgrimage to Brindaban or Benares when God is with us? Have sincere and earnest belief in the Real God of the universe. Books will never cure your atheism. What do you see in India to-day? Civilization on one side, and on the other scepticism and dissipation. O degraded Bengal, how long will you swallow the abominable infidelity of Western civilization? Ah! our forefathers were simple. They used to learn the wisdom and love of God at the feet of the Ganges and trees. The modern civilized hypocrites are splendid book-worms. They forsake yonder trees. But if you can spurn that little blade of grass

you are not a scientist. If you really seek true wisdom you must convert yourselves into *Dhruba* or *Prahlada* and have unswerving faith in the saving efficacy of God. You will not need books or earthly instructors to teach you true wisdom; but simply pray to the Living God and He will inspire you with divine wisdom. There is not a drop of blood in your body which does not come from God's feet. There is not a drop of water which you drink which does not come fresh from God. And God dwells concealed in every radiant flame. There is God in every flash of lightning as well as in a vast conflagration. When the sun rises it brings to us the gladdening messages of God's radiance. Study the sun, the moon, the human body, and then come and say whether you live in an atheistic universe. The beautiful volume of nature is before you. It incessantly proclaims the Great God Who is the Father of all nations. Imbue your heart with God's loving wisdom. Every little child whom the mother presses to her bosom is prophetic and poetic. Why shall we not be like these little children? Those who are full of the conceit of the world, and delight only in carnal pleasures, cannot behold God in nature. There is vile infidelity in them. But the men of simple faith who have no other language but that of prayer, know no one else but their Mother God. The child only wants to know who is its mother. The child is perfectly happy when it has learnt to love its mother who is its saviour, protector and teacher.

So you will enjoy perfect happiness if you only trust the Supreme Mother of the universe. Why shall you ask me to-night which religion is true? My business is with God and not with controversial theology. For a quarter of a century I have lived in, and for Him. He is my life and vitality and He

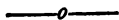
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is my habitation where I will dwell for ages without end. O my countrymen, see the real God of India and your eyes shall be pure. Show that you are pushing your energies uphill. I am full of hope for the future of India. Behold these two flags. One says:—"Truth will triumph." The other says:—"Come all nations unto the true God." The Kingdom of Heaven will certainly be established in India. True religion will sweep off all the accumulated errors and sins of India.

One word more. The Lord God is not only the world's saviour but salvation. See Him, hear Him and touch His feet. Here is our God, our Friend.

O God, India's God, ancient India's God, modern India's God, so many are gathered under Thy feet ; in the plentitude of Thy mercy tear our bonds of sin, that all India may ascribe to Thee glory for ever. India knows Thee alone. O Lord God, do Thou save India.

INDIA AND INDIA'S GOD.



Monday, 10th November, 1879.

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN, friends and gentlemen of Tirhut, you have now in your midst a number of missionaries who have come to you with the definite purpose of preaching the Living God.

The rising generation of India, I desire to speak to you of God who rules India. Different theologies have ruled India in different ways. The Aryans worshipped God through nature. They worshipped the sun, the twilight, the trees, the rivers &c. Their souls were full of the sentiments of one all-pervading God. In those times idolatry did not exist at all. The Aryans arrived at very correct notions of God through intuitive process. Science and philosophy were not then cultivated. Gradually errors crept into the Aryan theology. Some of the Aryans thought that all was God and God was the world, or man was God and God was man. Thus sprang pantheism. But pantheism at last failed to satisfy those who thirsted for some personal Deity. Then people began to imagine several deities. And thus came idolatry. Many false deities sprang up till the number of Hindu gods and goddesses increased to 33 millions.

In the fulness of time under the direction of an over-ruling Providence, European civilization came in India and there was a reawakening of the slumbering energies of India. When this reawakening took place, India was full of life and hope. Western literature and science revived and refreshed the

Hindu India. Science has made it impossible to worship idols. Even the school-boys of these days think it absurd to bow before idols. The light of a better literature and loftier science has chased away the fabled gods of India. We have now passed through the Egypt of idolatry. In the beginning the Aryans worshipped one God, afterwards there were worshipped many gods—now unfortunately they say there is no God. The hydra-headed monster, atheism, is now in the land. I speak of the one section of the community. As gods of stones and clay cannot administer salvation to mankind so atheism cannot satisfy all. To the sceptics God is a delusion and heaven a grandmother's tale or phantasmagoria. Some men have started up as godless philosophers. Many young men think that it is wrong to bend to any system of religion or morality. So young Bengal and young India is now godless. For this state of things Europe is partially responsible; but our countrymen are certainly to blame. Thank God that this scepticism has not spread among all classes. India wants a God who can be seen, heard and touched. Let us hope that we are marching onward; let us believe that the banners of the true God will be soon unfurled in Victoria's India. The whole history of British India is divine and not a chapter of it is profane. A constant evolution is going on in India. Yes, ancient India is nowhere—there is change and innovation in India everywhere. Our aspirations and our modes of living are novel. In the midst of all these there is the Eternal Providence doing its work. It is my belief that it is God Himself who has crowned Victoria with the crown of Empress. There is God in true politics. Our nation is essentially religious. It does everything in the name of God. The Hindu eats, drinks, walks

and reads religiously. The British nation has been brought here by the hand of Providence. There is no secular agency. The truly philosophical and religious heart will see God in history or in all sound political movements. Everything that is bad or human is being constantly eliminated. The Western sciences are coming into India in the name of God and who is that bold emperor who can say to the rising surges of the advancing tide of Western civilization—"Thus far shall you go and no further."? We shall prostrate at the feet of England and learn those truths which she is destined to teach us. We must gratefully accept these foreign forces, because they come in the name of God and not in the name of Empress Victoria or any other human being. There is the omnipotent hand in them and we dare not resist God. It is a sober and plain truth that God is acting in our midst, God has pronounced a benediction on India. I do not mean to say that He has forgotten other nations. There is special providence for every country. God is not dead and the channels of inspiration are not shut up. God is evolving out of Indian pantheism and idolatry the pure church of one God. There are truths in both these systems of pantheism and idolatry. That part of pantheism which says man or reptile is God is a shameful lie but it is truthful when it says that the spirit of God is everywhere. The true Deity is one. Never a Hindu said there are two *Brahmas*. The Hindus appreciated those men and women who possessed saintly characters. The beginning was grand; but the end was ignoble.

And if you accept this truth that the real God is one then we are all as kinsmen. In the root we are all one. We mean to revive that spirit of unity. The future God of India will be the true God of the universe. In spite of all forms of sensuality and

scepticism, India will accept the true God. The wildest sceptics will blush before the heavenly fire of true faith.

I am sorry to proclaim the fact that in the course of our march from the Egypt of idolatry to the blessed promised land, which is pure Theism, we shall have to fight many a battle in which perhaps our nearest kinsmen may be wounded. The decades may be full of sufferings in the sweet household. Aye, there is travail before a child is born, before the kingdom of heaven is established. The youngmen of India may crave after carnal pleasures and turn sceptics ; but God will establish His beautiful Church. As He called forth this precious universe of life and joy out of darkness so will He organize His Holy family out of confusion and disorder and that family will be the wonder of ages. Countrymen, remember that you are descendants of a noble race. Be true to your ancestors. The Lord God will lead you to the promised land where you will see Him everywhere. God is not dead. He is a flame of fire to be felt and touched.

The scientists speak of a Force which is at the root of all phenomena. They dare not call it God. Learn to distinguish the real from the unreal or phenomenal. The Lord God endureth for ever, now raising India, then America and then some other country. See the real God. Is not God inside your heart? All the blood vessels and all muscles of your physical organisms are instinct with God. If you have faith even the dust of Tirhut will reveal to you God.

Pray to Him "Lord, give me purity"—and the illumination will be perfect. Accept, my friends, these words as words of hope and cheer—to stimulate you—I wish to take off from you lethargy and all sceptical tendency. Approach God both as your Father and Mother. He will reclaim India.

THE DANGEROUS PERHAPS.

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Monday, 17th November, 1879.

'PERHAPS' is the idol of the civilized world. Why should this 'Perhaps' reign over us? There is **no** 'Perhaps' in science. There is demonstration in mathematics and physics; why should there be 'Perhaps' in our religion and ethics? All bow before the logic of mathematics as the certainty of mathematical truths is proved beyond cavilling. Unsophisticated humanity accepts them at once. Every man—religious, moral, political—even the humblest householder—accepts them without the least hesitation. But ethics is not history, religion is not mathematics, although far above mathematics is religion and far above history is ethics. How long shall we keep moral and religious matters in abeyance? Is it our duty to worship God daily? Are we morally bound to be loyal to our Empress? The moral sluggard might say: "A little more slumber, a little more sleep." Now the question is—Is it possible to arrive at certainty in ethics and religion? At present, 'Perhaps' is the *alpha* and *omega* of almost all ethical and religious systems. We try to kick at this 'Perhaps.' Ethics and religion do rest upon certain and well grounded foundations. Intuitively, instinctively, naturally man feels gratitude to his benefactor. So there cannot be "Perhaps we ought to be grateful to our benefactors." The feeling of gratitude is right. Gratitude is a bounden duty now and for ever.

We must be grateful to Christ, Mahomet, Chaitanya and all other great devout souls who have exalted humanity. True ethics will allow no one to be disloyal to any of our master-minds. The history of each man has deposited the wisdom of its great and good men. If any man has helped me to become holier he will certainly command my gratitude and reverence. Every holy example is sure to thrill and throb our heart. The example of a heaven-aspiring *Rishi* or of a holy-minded ascetic, who gave up all worldly thoughts for God, cannot but exercise some holy influence upon us. Gratitude is certainly a moral duty. So as regards religion. We should be positively convinced of God's reality. There ought to be no 'Perhaps,' and no wavering regarding our faith in God. Rather say there exists no god or be fully convinced of the overpowering and overwhelming reality of God. Will you, educated Indians, cherish certain doubts about the reality of God? Is not the existence of God more real than your own existence? If you say you do not believe in your own existence your magistrates will send you to a lunatic asylum. Every sane man believes in his own reality, though he has never seen his own spirit. Have full faith in God. With half-hearted men I have nothing to do. They cannot regenerate India. Their *perhaps, may's* and *might be's* are shameful. As we touch ourselves so we touch God. As soon as I say, here am I, there is God beneath this self-assertion. What is God's name? "I Am." This solemn proposition "I Am" is written upon everything. God proclaims His own existence. You cannot dissociate yourself from God. You cannot live independently. Here is no 'perhaps.' The besetting presence of the Mighty Judge pervades us. There may be no police or human eye to detect our sinister motives ;

but God's eye is always upon us. None of us can pass scot-free from that eye. The Divine Judge is running to take hold of me. The immanent—the indwelling Spirit is ever with me. Without Him I can do nothing. He has gone into the very foundation of my heart. As we are certain about the existence of God so we are equally certain about immortality and conscience. As we throw off the outer garment so we throw off this body. I am not my body—it is a machine which I ply. I not live in my body. I draw my life directly from God. If I live in my God, I live in Him for ever. Immortality is a continuance of our existence—a perpetual duration in God. This continued spiritual progression is our next world. Next world is not a local heaven of sensual delights. God is our heaven; God is the abode of all prophets. We realize the next world when we worship God. Prayer is offered not on earth but in heaven. The soul has gone up to its Maker when it prays. In prayer I am at one with God. God is in me and I am in my God.

Conscience is not a faculty. It is the very God of heaven and earth. When I am going to do something wrong, I hear such a voice as this :—"Villain, art thou really desirous to commit this diabolical act?" I look about on all sides; but I know not whence emanates this voice. Is it myself convicting myself! No. It is beyond myself. It is God Himself who speaks with dictatorial authority. I cannot enjoy peace unless I do the will of my Father. It is a command. Who tells you to love your wife? It is God's command. You are bound by God's will to give her your affection. Who tells me to drink out of this glass pure water and quench my thirst? Nature's God is my God. Whether we eat or drink or do any other thing we should do all things to glorify the name of God. The Aryans,

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our forefathers, used to behold God in all things and all actions. Forsake your *perhaps* and scepticism, cultivate the living faith which beholds the besetting God everywhere, and thus regenerate India.

